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ABSTRACT

Eight papers, arising from a June 1998 seminar on the professions and public life, examine issues related to the practice of public scholarship and the new connections that institutions of higher education are forging with the public. Following a foreword by Deborah Witte, the papers are: (1) "The Academy and Public Life: Healing the Rift" (Scott London), which reports on the seminar; (2) "An Ethic for the Public Scholar" (Thomas Michaud), which urges the academy to avoid academic hubris and practice self-assessment and alignment with, rather than above, the public; (3) "The Practice of the Public Intellectual" (Edward Royce), which promotes the idea of the public intellectual as a combination of scholarship and activism; (4) "Toward a Public Science: Building a New Social Contract between Science and Society" (Scott Peters, Nicholas Jordan, and Gary Lemme), which calls for a "public science" that links work and citizenship; (5) "Faculty Citizenship and the Liberal Arts" (Douglas Challenger and Craig Platt), which describes theme-based curricular reform at Franklin Pierce College (New Hampshire); (6) "Practicing and Modeling the 'Arts of Democracy': Higher Education's Renewed Civic Commitment" (Nancy L. Thomas and Deborah Hirsch), which documents changes in the relationship of higher education to its communities; (7) "An Exchange of Knowledge" (Amy Catherine Sokolowski), which reviews two books: "Transforming Higher Education: A Vision for Learning in the 21stCentury," by Donald M. Norris and Michael G. Dolence, and "The Monster Under the Bed: How Business Is Mastering the Opportunity of Knowledge for Profit," by Stan Davis and Jim Botkin; and, finally, (8) "Megachallenges" (David Mathews), which proposes four megachallenges that have implications for the relationship of higher education to the public. (DB)

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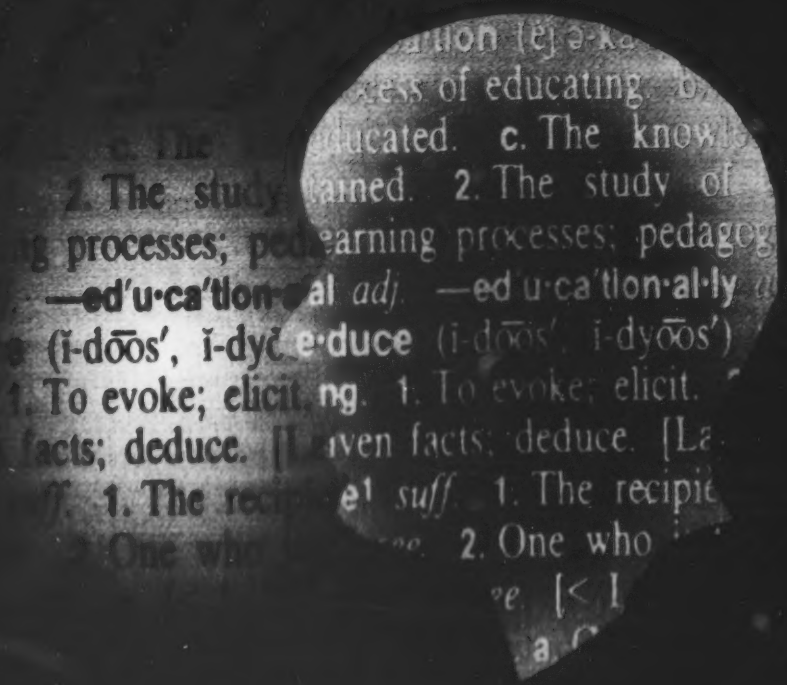

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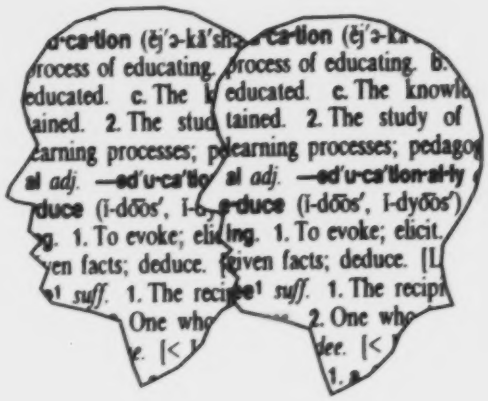

HIGHER EDUCATION EXCHANGE

1999

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FOREWORD

By Deborah Witte

Last June, the Kettering Foundation convened a seminar on the professions and public life. Among the tasks of the working seminar was to explore how some of our professional institutions might act to address central problems concerning public life in contemporary times. More than 70 individuals from the fields of philanthropy, journalism, and higher education met for 2 days to discuss questions and confront challenges such as: What responsibilities do professional institutions have toward our democracy and its citizens? and How might professionals act to address current problems of citizen participation?

The seminar provides the context for this issue of the *Higher Education Exchange* devoted to examining the practice of public scholarship. In previous issues of this journal we have explored, from a theoretical point of view, the *idea* of public scholarship as a public-making activity that seeks to join the public with the academy in pursuit of the good life and a stronger, more effective, encompassing democracy. We have tried our hand at defining and describing it with some limited success. In this issue, the articles address the "doing" of public scholarship. This issue highlights many projects, programs, and curricula that have one or more of the characteristics that make up the idea of public scholarship and the new connections that institutions are forging with the public.

Scott London reports on the June 1998 seminar in the opening essay of this issue. He describes the concern of many institutions of higher education about the relation of their missions, to the public as a whole, as well as the decline of civic engagement and a reassessment of professional practice. Should colleges and universities be more responsive to the needs of public life? What are some of the practical steps that might be taken toward narrowing the gap between the public and higher education? What professional practices might help to model civic practices? The participants wrestled with these questions and shared examples of how they are trying to meet these challenges. London characterizes the seminar as a small step on a long road to

the reengagement of higher education with the public.

Tom Michaud, a participant in the seminar, shares his perspective on the question of public scholarship with an essay on the distinctions between academics standing outside of and above the public, and standing *with* the public. He calls for the academy to avoid academic hubris and practice self-assessment and he asks, What ought to be the character of a public scholar?

Edward Royce, in his essay, reclaims the phrase "public intellectual" and provides a treasure trove of faculty voices struggling with how to become public intellectuals. He promotes the idea of the public intellectual as a combination of scholarship and activism and highlights the variety of forms that public intellectualism can take. Royce finds scholars (public intellectuals) who emphasize the importance of a collective context, of connecting to others situated in community groups, and other nonacademic organizations. Royce points to some of the practical advantages of a scholar's expertise or specialization when they can serve as translators or popularizers of technical ideas. Royce finds there is nothing inherent in specialization that precludes academics from joining with the public.

In the next article, Scott Peters and his colleagues at the University of Minnesota argue for the development of a "public science." Providing some historical precedence, they call for science as public work that builds the commonwealth. As faculty members, they have begun to build a coalition of like-minded others who share a conviction of the importance of linking work and citizenship to developing a new social contract. They believe intellectual and public progress can be made only by including insights from economic, social, and environmental ways of knowing. A full and concrete examination of the West Central Experiment Station at the university provides the reader with an example of what the authors and their collaborators espouse. While they face many obstacles, the group is committed to the struggle of realizing a civic mission for science.

Another example of faculty practice of public scholarship is provided by Doug Challenger and Craig Platt as they share their experiences at Franklin Pierce College in New Hampshire. Efforts at curricular reform through the 1980s were unsuccessful until the adoption of the Pierce Plan with a centerpiece theme of the individual and community. While the civic mission of the college was not an articulated goal of the curricular reform, in retrospect

Challenger and Platt have found that the theme not only intruded into the content of courses, but also into the way faculty began to talk about themselves and their institution. It led to new thinking about professional roles and institutional practice. Challenger and Platt have seen themselves and some of their colleagues move toward a new understanding of the public as well as new forms of faculty citizenship.

Nancy Thomas and Deborah Hirsch, in the following article, document the changes they see in the relationship of higher education to its communities. They first consider "*why* higher education is reaching out to external constituencies," and then address where civic engagement is occurring on campuses. They invite the reader to measure their own civic practice against the examples they provide.

Amy Sokolowski's review of two books, both of which address the future of higher education, follows. Many institutions are experiencing competition for students from corporate training centers and other forms of nontraditional certification offered by proprietary ventures. However, Sokolowski questions any movement toward redefining higher education centered on economic values alone.

In the concluding article, David Mathews suggests a broad focus for higher education and introduces four megachallenges that have implications for the relationship of higher education to the public. These are the reemergence of "conviction-based conflict"; "wicked problems"; the changing standards of knowledge; and current uncertainties about our ability to govern ourselves. According to Mathews, an important role for higher education is partnering with the public to find ways to solve these problems. A right and useful role for institutions of higher education is providing the space in which citizens, students, and faculty can come together to wrestle with these megachallenges.

THE ACADEMY AND PUBLIC LIFE: HEALING THE RIFT

A Report from the Seminar on the Professions and Public Life

By Scott London

Over the last decade or two, much has been written about the decline of civic engagement in the United States and the crisis of public confidence in many of our social and political institutions. According to numerous studies, Americans feel that politics has evolved into a "system" made up of various institutions and political forces that effectively shuts them out of the democratic process. People are disillusioned not only by government but also by many professions that they feel have driven a wedge between the citizenry and the political process.

The trouble with institutions, in the public's view, is that they both represent and grant legitimacy to a system that no longer works as it should. Institutions also foster an ethos of professionalism that elevates the role of "experts" over that of regular citizens. As a result, people no longer perceive the professional as "one of us." The lawyer, the journalist, and the doctor are seen instead as members of a specialized elite who claim to speak on behalf of the public but do not actually represent it.

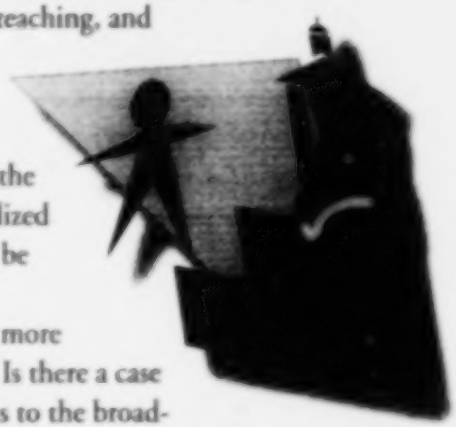
These problems have not been lost on people in the professions. Some institutions have mounted campaigns aimed at "listening" to the public through focus group studies, on-line forums, and toll-free telephone numbers. Others have reached out through extensive public service initiatives and community outreach projects. Still others have attempted to "engage the public" by inviting citizen input and participation in institutional decision making. Good intentions notwithstanding, many of these efforts have only deepened the divide between the public and the professions.

In some cases, these failures have prompted a reassessment of traditional institutional practices. As some professionals point out, restoring public trust and promoting civic engagement cannot be achieved through public relations campaigns or, as many presume, by simply doing their job "a little better." What the professions must do

is reexamine their working assumptions about public life. They need to find ways to work with the public, rather than *on behalf of* the public, in the words of Cole Campbell, editor of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. "In my experience, working *on behalf of* the public is somewhat arrogant and very much resisted by the public."

Cole Campbell is one of a growing number of journalists who are actively rethinking the role of the press in public life. The movement, variously known as "civic" or "public" journalism, is aimed not simply at improving the presentation of news or meeting the changing demands of newspaper readers, but providing a place where shared information is discussed and translated into public action. A similar reform movement is under way in philanthropy where foundation leaders are exploring new approaches to grant-making aimed at building what they call "civil infrastructure" in American towns and cities.

Some colleges and universities are also beginning to take steps in this direction, though it is still too early to speak of a bona fide movement. For example, a number of schools are reshaping their curricula to better integrate research, teaching, and community engagement. Some humanities scholars are also developing a concept of "public scholarship" aimed at breaking down the traditional distinction between specialized academic knowledge and what might be called practical "public knowledge."



Can colleges and universities be more responsive to the needs of public life? Is there a case to be made for connecting the campus to the broader community? And what are some of the practical steps that might be taken toward narrowing the gap between the public and the world of higher education?

These were some of the central questions taken up at the Seminar on the Professions and Public Life, a two-day event held in Washington, D.C., in late June 1998. Convened by the Kettering Foundation, the seminar brought together a remarkable group of some 70 individuals — scholars, policymakers, journalists, foundation executives, public opinion researchers, citizen activists, and leaders in the world of higher education — to explore the role of the professions in building and strengthening American public life.

There seemed to be little disagreement that the institutions of

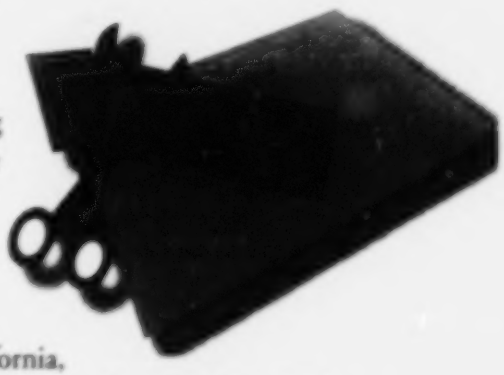
higher education have become isolated from public life. More and more Americans look on the academy merely as a place for professors to get tenured and students to get credentialed. Major universities raise millions of dollars to study public problems, yet they rarely apply their research to the real needs of communities. As Hofstra University's Michael D'Innocenzo remarked, "We would like to think of universities as communities of discourse, but too often they turn out to be more like fiefdoms with tenured faculty, like feudal lords, doing essentially whatever they want."

Lew Friedland described the University of Wisconsin where he teaches journalism as a "feudal" and "quasi-capitalistic" institution. On the one hand, he said, it follows the Hobbesian model of "war of each against all" — within departments, between departments, and between the institution and the board of regents. On the other hand, "we largely orient our research toward the needs of large businesses." On top of that, he added, there is an "iron wall" between academic research and society at large.

Scott Clemons of the Florida House of Representatives noted that in his experience many colleges and universities respond to public demands by passing the buck to legislators. "They come to us and say, 'What are you going to do for us?' 'Will you give us a larger slice of the budget pie?'" As a result, he said, "we see universities as a problem we have to deal with, instead of a help in the search for solutions to other problems."

The fact that higher education is directing more and more of its attention to the needs of the private sector rather than the needs of civil society is bound to have troublesome consequences for the future.

Several participants spoke of the widespread shift taking place in higher education from civic education, in its broadest sense, toward professional training. The fact that higher education is directing more and more of its attention to the needs of the private sector rather than the needs of civil society is bound to have troublesome consequences for the future. Larry Vanderhoef of the University of California, Davis, pointed out that the mission of the academy has historically been twofold — to make higher education available to more and more people, and to direct its efforts toward the needs of the greater society. "It's the second principle that seems to have gotten lost," he said. The challenge, therefore, is not so much to invent a new principle as to reinvigorate an old one.



In an after-dinner presentation, New York University's Thomas Bender offered an incisive overview of the social and historical forces that have forced a split between the academy and public life. He began his comments with the observation that the modern research university was founded by men of the highest civic ideals. Though they were educating a relatively privileged elite — future leaders in the worlds of government, finance, journalism — they nevertheless made it their mission to prepare students for an active public life. But this began to change with the rapid expansion of enrollment at the turn of the century, and again following World War II. The research university now began to assume a new mission. The aim shifted from preparing young people for public life to producing experts within disciplines who could apply specialized knowledge to the problems of public life.

This change had a number of troublesome consequences, according to Bender. First, it fostered a self-referential academic culture increasingly alienated from public life. The university was now "large enough" and "interesting enough" to "capture very smart people and keep them entertained without them having to pay much attention to a larger public." Second, it encouraged the production of specialized academic knowledge, as distinct from public or democratic knowledge. Third, and closely related, it put a premium on authority and expertise and thereby promoted the doctrine of professionalism.

"The idea of authoritative knowledge is quite a noble idea, but it's also a dangerous academic dream."

Bender went on to say that any hope of restoring the civic mission of the academy depends on its adoption of a more democratic institutional culture. "The university may have to demonstrate more of the qualities it's asking the public to demonstrate before it has much to offer the public." It must also acknowledge and respect different "habitats of knowledge," he said. "The idea of authoritative knowledge is quite a noble idea, but it's also a dangerous academic dream. It discourages what I would call intellectual bilingualism." Academic theories and specialized discourse have their place. The question is whether sc' lars can translate their knowledge into the language of public life. "Rather than simply assert our authority, we must offer our contribution and not claim to speak for the whole."

Bender concluded with the assertion that "we can kill local democratic vitality by playing the expert; or, we can nourish that vitality, first, by providing a site for public conversation (universities are vastly underutilized as sites for public conversation) and, secondly, by becoming a partner in that conversation — not a controller,

If we understand higher education as a public good then restoring the ...authority of the academy can only be done under the auspices of the public.

not a teller, but a partner. Authority in this model has to give way to dialogue and collaboration."

William Sullivan of LaSalle University followed Bender with some brief reflections of his own on the disconnection between the academy and public life. The trouble with higher education today, he observed, is that it suffers from a diminished authority — authority not in the usual sense of the word, but as Hannah Arendt used to refer to it: as an essential defining purpose or identity. This kind of authority has less to do with power and influence and more to do with public trust and accountability. If we understand higher education as a public good, Sullivan said, then restoring the authority of the academy can only be done under the auspices of the public. "If you scan today's discourse about education, education is described primarily as a vehicle for individual economic advance. But there is something called common goods, or public goods, that are worth achieving too, because without them our particular goods are not stable or secure."

New Directions in Higher Education

A number of colleges and universities are taking up the challenge spelled out by Bender and Sullivan. Several seminar participants pointed to initiatives currently under way within the academy. These are projects aimed not only at creating more public spaces within the university, but incorporating deliberation and discussion about public issues into the curriculum, and building deeper and more reciprocal relationships with communities. At a more basic level, they are efforts to rethink the essential role of education in a democratic society.

Jean Cameron of the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul, Minnesota, offered a vivid example of this sort of reform. She related how the college's administration began to push for a change in the core curriculum some years ago. "The faculty rallied and worked on it," she said. "But one of the things they discovered was they were unable to work together. They worked against each other." After repeated efforts, the dean decided it was time for a new approach. She brought in a moderator with some skills and experience in the process of deliberation. The dean also recognized that it was not enough to have just the faculty working on the problem — everyone at the college had to be involved. So the process was opened up to include the entire college community. What finally emerged from the effort was a new curriculum with an innovative community service

dimension.

One of the most significant aspects of the story, according to Cameron, is that the effort began not as a grand initiative to change the college or to introduce a new civic mission. Rather, it began as a somewhat prosaic challenge — the need for a new core curriculum. "In changing our method of discourse," she said, "we were able to bring ourselves to a different level, and to create a public work we could be proud of."

Betty Knighton of the University of Charleston, West Virginia, reported on the growing number of colleges and universities convening National Issues Forums today. The forums not only offer tools for community problem solving, she explained, they also teach participants the art of deliberation. In one forum at the University of Charleston, for example, people came together to discuss their relationship as citizens to government institutions and elected officials. She recalled how a student had spoken up at the end of the forum. "She had never been to this kind of a program before. She said, 'I can't believe that I'm 19 years old, I'm a political science major, and I've never been involved in this kind of discussion before. I've been in debates. I've been taught how to debate. I've been taught how to look at issues in partisan terms. But I've never been involved in this kind of a discussion before.' A woman across the room answered her and said, 'Don't feel bad, honey. I'm 75 and it's my first time too.'" The benefits of these sorts of forums, Knighton said, is that they teach people the skills of deliberation that they can then take with them into the community.

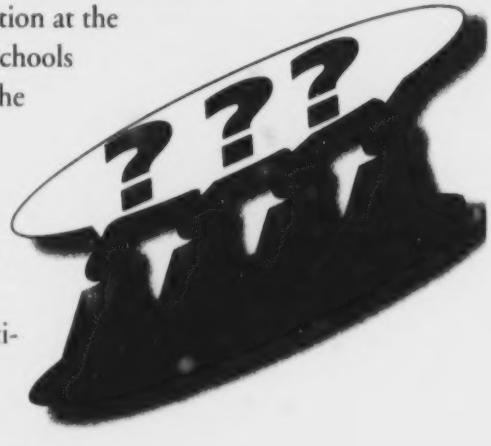
The College of DuPage outside Chicago has taken the National Issues Forums model one step further by incorporating public deliberation into the core practices and goals of the institution, as Sadie Flucas pointed out. "We came to a recognition that if we were really going to be serious about developing the intellectual core of civic life, then what we needed to do was to have a more comprehensive plan for modeling citizenship standards. This year, our president established a special advisory council or board for a DuPage Humanities Forum in recognition of the fact that, as an institution, we needed to have a plan for how we were going to engage the entire community in public deliberations." What the college is hoping, Flucas said, is that the initiative will encourage citizens to come together on their own to address community problems. "We think that with the comprehensive approach we are now using, we will be better able to serve the people within our school districts and get them involved in public

deliberation. We are the only public institution of higher education within our school district, so we feel a very special obligation to do this."

The Idea of Public Scholarship

As these examples indicate, a growing number of academics are beginning to challenge conventional assumptions about civic education and experiment with new approaches. What can we learn from these efforts? How do they relate to the intellectual work being done by public scholars like Thomas Bender and William Sullivan? And do they point the way to a more clearly defined concept of public scholarship? The discussion of these questions revolved around three central themes: adopting civic practices within the academy, connecting research to the needs of the community, and reexamining the meaning and the uses of knowledge.

Modeling civic practices within the institution. Several participants pointed to the disjunction between what institutions of higher learning teach and what they practice. "We don't model for our students what it's like to engage in civic discourse," said Margaret Miller, president of the American Association of Higher Education. "In most colleges and universities — at least at the departmental level — the conversation at the table isn't occurring." There are some schools where democratic discourse is part of the institutional culture, Miller said, but they are the exception rather than the rule. "I think the impact of that on our students is that they don't learn how to do it."



The starting point for genuine citizenship education is to cultivate the essential arts of democracy within the institution — the ability to think and frame issues in public terms, to engage with others, and to pursue new courses of action through deliberative inquiry. These are the skills of public problem solving which, in Lew Friedland's words, "bind people together" and help them "accomplish some common end."

Relocalizing the academy. Healing the rift between the academy and the public also involves grounding the activities of the institution within the larger community and seeking out new rela-

tionships that bridge the gap. One of the most common suggestions toward that end was for colleges and universities to serve as public spaces in the broadest possible sense. In this respect, community colleges have an obvious advantage over larger research universities since they are seen by the public as community resources. Robert McSpadden of Gulf Coast Community College in Panama City, Florida, described his campus as a "community space." Only one sitting president of the U.S. has ever visited Panama City, he said. But when he did, this event took place at Gulf Coast Community College. The college has served as a venue for town meetings, forums on race relations, debates about proposed highway bills, and study circles about affirmative action. McSpadden said that hosting and convening public events is a very direct and powerful way that institutions of higher learning can contribute to a more vital public sphere.

Making the academy more responsive to the community also involves working *with* the public, rather than *on behalf of* the public, by tailoring research to the real needs of people in their day-to-day lives. Harris Sokoloff of the University of Pennsylvania described it as "service research." Service research "meets all the criteria of disciplinary research," he said, but at the same time it's aimed at "making a difference in the communities in which it's conducted. It's not research *on*, it's research *with*." Sokoloff went on to say that people in colleges and universities "need to think of themselves as parts of larger communities" and "do their work in ways that create connections."

Public knowledge is the sort of knowledge that emerges from the give-and-take of collaborative inquiry.

Rethinking the meaning and the uses of knowledge. A related challenge involves cultivating public knowledge, as distinct from authoritative knowledge. Public knowledge is the sort of knowledge that emerges from the give-and-take of collaborative inquiry. "Probably the most radical idea is that there is more than one way of looking at something," observed Caryn McTigh Musil of the Association of American Colleges and Universities. The reigning idea today is that scholars provide expertise or extract information from the public rather than join with the public in the creation of knowledge. Public scholarship is a "much more dialogic, participatory, student-centered, project-oriented, collaborative endeavor," Musil said. "It recognizes that knowledge is located in the students as well as in our heads. We certainly have a lot to offer. But the students, with the authority of their experience and with their situational knowledge, bring enormous things to the classroom." At bottom, she

added, "we can't do our scholarship well if we don't have multiple sources that inform it and make it grow." The challenge is to "make the circle whole."

Thomas Bender cited a 1994 study, *The New Production of Knowledge*, by an international team of scholars who contend that in coming years more and more knowledge will be developed outside the halls of higher learning — in what Bender called "opportunistic and transdisciplinary" settings. The intellectual style in these places is different from that associated with the university. Theory is much closer to the "point of use" than with traditional academic knowledge. In a sense, this kind of knowledge dissolves the categorical distinction so often made between theory and practice. It's open-ended and embraces a plurality of perspectives.

Acording to Bender, the trouble with academic knowledge is that it's self-referential. Its meaning and usefulness are measured only in relation to what is already known within its given discipline. As New York University's Jay Rosen remarked, "the ultimate test of the knowledge produced by the institution must lie not within the institution, but outside of it. What you have achieved by going about the way you go about knowing has to be ultimately measured not within the university but in the community outside." The challenge is not to do away with academic knowledge but to engage what Bender called "the many habitats of knowledge."

The Practical Challenges

There appeared to be a general consensus that addressing the disconnection between higher education and civil society must begin by tackling some of the systemic problems within the academy. One of the most challenging of these is the relatively low priority given to civic work. Zelda Gamson of the University of Massachusetts-Boston, observed that "until very recently, higher education has not been particularly interested in the civic agenda. College presidents have not taken that on. It's not 'normative.' It's kind of 'soft.' It's not particularly scholarly — even though the scholarly work on the issue of democracy and the breakdown of community and civic life has come from universities."

Another major obstacle is the fact that the modern research uni-

versity is almost completely structured around academic disciplines. Harold Saunders, a member of the Board of Trustees at Princeton University, noted that the most promising work taking place within the academy is being done by individuals, not academic departments. The challenge is to break out of disciplinary boundaries — or perhaps to redefine and expand them. The question we must ask, Saunders said, is "how can universities encourage people to do that without asking them to throw away all they have invested in those disciplines?"

The question prompted several good observations. Fairinda West of Oakton Community College in Des Plaines, Illinois, commented that it's important for people within the academy not only to speak across disciplinary boundaries, but to "speak across roles." She recalled a recent forum at her community college where this method was especially productive. Trustees, faculty, staff, students, and even members of the grounds crew came together to deliberate on the issue of local governance. What they discovered was that people quickly dispensed with their professional identities and spoke out as concerned citizens.

... colleges and universities born out of the struggle for expanded access and opportunity tend to be driven by different imperatives than traditional research universities.

Another way to overcome institutional boundaries is to teach interdisciplinary courses, according to West. This sort of teaching is not only professionally satisfying, but "it models for students a way in which professionals can deliberate and consider issues without being bounded by specialized language." Interdisciplinary education is really an effort to create a "third language," she said — not an academic language or a street language, but a shared language constructed in the course of addressing a common interest.

Not all colleges and universities are organized around disciplines. Some institutions are guided instead by a central mission or principle, such as service. Henry Ponder, president of the National Association for Equal Opportunities in Higher Education, explained that private colleges and universities born out of the struggle for expanded access and opportunity tend to be driven by different imperatives than traditional research universities. Service is typically an integral part of the curriculum at these schools. They often strike up partnerships with local civic associations and make campus facilities available to the community. In addition, these schools tend to emphasize the value of institutionwide forums and debates about the school's role in the community, tenure, and other issues. On occasion, they open up the decision-making process to include faculty and even students. According to Ponder, these institutions model a different relationship to public life from which other schools can

learn.

Evidently, some universities and associations are learning from these examples. James Murray III, vice president of the American Council on Education, pointed to some of the discussions going on in his and other presidential associations. The work focuses not only on education for civic responsibility, but also on fostering a more active role for colleges and universities within the community. "We need to have a much greater consciousness on the part of our leadership," Murray said. "We also need better cooperation and better communication. We do a terrible job at that."

Several participants observed that the impulse to change must be a collective one. As Michael D'Innocenzo put it, "it's not going to work if it's from the top down — if it's college presidents, chancellors, or deans of the higher education establishment. And it's not going to work if it's from the bottom up. It really has to be a shared endeavor." A first step, he said, is for everyone within the institution to come together and ask what can be done.

Governing boards have an especially important role to play here, observed Thomas Longin of the Association of Governing Boards. They have control over the mission, the programs, and the resources of the institution. Unless they see the value of change, they are going to resist it and thereby prevent any substantive reforms from taking place. The key, Longin said, is for boards to recognize their role as facilitators of dialogue. They need to bring in a range of perspectives and ideas, not just from within the institution, but also from the community at large. "If the common wisdom is that students and faculty and community interests don't belong on boards of trustees, then we are very, very far away from beginning a useful conversation."

Longin went on to say that the problems of higher education "will not be solved at the departmental level or the school level or interdivisionally within the institutions, and they will not be solved by the institutions alone. Dialogue has to transcend existing structures of government within the institutions or it will not work."

Margaret Miller added that governing boards ask the crucial question: "So what?" One of their key functions is to demand accountability and self-assessment within the institution. These qualities are not well rooted in the academy, in her view. Research tends to be directed outward, toward society at large, but rarely toward the functioning of the institution itself. As a result, it's difficult to know whether the instruction and research taking place are serving their desired purpose.

Conclusion

The impulse to nurture and strengthen public life is effecting widespread change across the country — in newsrooms, in foundations, on campuses, in state legislatures, and city halls. Professional reform efforts aimed at rethinking the traditional dichotomy between institutions and the public are already well along in journalism and philanthropy. Whether these ideas will take root in the field of higher education remains to be seen. But as the Washington seminar drew to a close, there was a bracing sense of commitment and possibility, in spite of the many practical challenges involved.

Current trends aimed at relocalizing the institutions of higher learning, articulating a concept of public scholarship, and reassessing the relationship between the expert and the public certainly suggest a movement in the right direction. Each of these efforts is founded on the idea of higher education as a public good, as an essential component of a robust public sphere. Still, countervailing trends within the academy, especially the shift away from civic education toward preparing students for the job market, may limit the overall effectiveness of these initiatives.

Reform efforts in higher education face a different set of obstacles than they do in journalism and philanthropy. Higher education is a vast and diverse field in which scholars, administrators, students, and trustees too often find themselves at cross purposes. As Kettering Foundation President David Mathews noted in his closing remarks, "I hear very different conversation coming from students, faculty members, associations, and boards. I hear one group talking about planning. I hear one group talking about management. I hear one group talking about the pressures from legislators." Unless the academy can find a way to reconcile these conflicting modes of discourse, reform efforts may be tenuous at best.

Success may ultimately depend on whether the forces of change link up and cohere into a new movement. The main ingredients are already in place, as Jay Rosen pointed out — "leadership from the top, diversity of players, convening organizations, certain kinds of strategies, some key lessons, and some money." On the other hand, history shows that forces do not always converge. "There can be the ingredients of change, but they just never get together," in Mathews' words. "When forces do converge, though, there is the possibility of real and dramatic change."

If the forces do converge — and there is reason to hope that they will — the Washington gathering may be remembered as a small but important step in paving the way.

AN ETHIC FOR THE PUBLIC SCHOLAR

By Thomas Michaud

After the Second World War, existentialism, especially as communicated by J. P. Sartre, was principally thematized with the norm of "engagement." Sartre advocated an engaged political activism, and he encouraged intellectuals to follow his lead in promoting a "Marxist" cause of social revolution for the proletariat.[1] With such an engagement platform, Sartre's existentialism became a reformist ideology, and those intellectuals, including university professors who committed themselves to it, used their positions and cultural influence to fortify their social activism.

When Alan Wolfe charges that public scholarship is a flawed concept, a legacy of the 1960s that is squarely in the liberal tradition, perhaps he is perceiving public scholarship as if it were following existentialism's activist engagement orientation.[2] Wolfe's claim that asking scholars to "enlarge public understanding . . . is a way of saying that the scholars do not like the understandings the public already has," seems to confirm that from his perspective, public scholarship is an ideological reformist movement: a movement that aims to impose its agenda on the public for the sake of inculcating such liberal values as openness, inclusiveness, tolerance, and distributive justice.

Wolfe's troubles with public scholarship's engagement aims are also manifest with his suspicions about the reliance on Deweyan principles. Wolfe warns that John Dewey's view of the public as "inchoate" led Dewey to prefer an idealized public, "one that did not yet exist as opposed to one whose influence could be felt everywhere around him. As a result, Dewey's democratic instincts, always so palpably clear in his writings, can easily become undemocratic in the hands of social engineers convinced that the public's understanding leaves something to be desired."[3]

Although Jay Rosen, Jean Cameron, David Mathews, and others have effectively countered Wolfe's polemic,[4] maybe some of his criticisms should be revisited by asking: How can Wolfean misunderstandings of public scholarship be avoided in the future? Are "public scholarship" and the "civic academy" concepts in need of

further definition and clearer purposes in order to avoid becoming perceived as, or actually becoming, reformist engagement ideologies?

These questions are particularly significant in light of the Seminar on the Professions and Public Life held by the Kettering Foundation. The seminar brought together representatives from three major social institutions, journalism, foundations, and higher education. The primary task was to explore how those institutions "might act to address central problems attending to public life in a contemporary democracy."[5] One of those central problems is a citizenry that is distrustful that such institutions are really serving the public interest, but is also unsure of its own capacity to exercise active, responsible citizenship in a daunting, complex polity.

Given the heterogeneous group assembled, the seminar's discussions were wide ranging with numerous strategies proposed and current civic efforts cited as models. However, it unsurprisingly appeared that unlike journalism, which already has at least a nascent sense of civic responsibility, and foundations, who can define their missions as directors, boards and donors choose, the institution of higher education faces the toughest obstacle in accepting a civic academy orientation.

...higher education apparently revels in the status of the disconnected scholar.

Besides the discipline-based research traditions that establish merit criteria for faculty advancement and might scorn public scholarship as mere popularized community service, higher education apparently revels in the status of the disconnected scholar. Such a scholar stands outside of and above the public hoi polloi and deigns to engage their interests only as the authoritative expert or distempered critic.

In short, the institution of higher education faces academic hubris as the main impediment to appreciating the civic academy. And, it is precisely because of this hubris that Wolfe's criticisms and especially the questions posed above must be broached. The hubris of the academy could indeed lead to academics engaging the public as reformer ideologues or expert social engineers who have all the answers even before listening to the public's concerns.

For the ancient Greeks, *sophrosyne* (i.e., moderation or tem-

What ought to be the character of a public scholar?

perance) was the antidote for hubris, since a temperate person would not indulge in extremely prideful and arrogantly self-aggrandizing conduct. In contemporary parlance, *sophrosyne* could even be described as a conscientious self-assessment, a sort of introspective values-audit by which one scrupulously evaluates the values operative within one's intentions and conduct.

Perhaps in order to refine its definitions and clarify its purposes, the public scholarship and civic academy initiatives should exercise some *sophrosyne*, some careful self-assessment of the values they do and ought to maintain. This can be done by seeking an ethic that would ground the initiatives' purposes in the dispositional characters of those who aim to work as public scholars and contribute to fashioning the civic academy. So, at this point the questions become: What ought to be the character of a public scholar? And, how should that character be integral to the overall purposes of a civic academy?

In defining the studies of ethics and politics, Aristotle offered the following distinction.[6] Politics is described as the master science as it studies the all-important issue of what is good for society in general; what is the form of social organization and government that best enables a society to flourish. Ethics is a species of politics as ethics studies what is good for the individual; what type of character best enables individual flourishing. Aristotle believed that social flourishing was directly dependent on the characters of individual citizens: whether as citizens they develop the virtuous habits that would translate into forming a virtuous body politic and thereby a flourishing social state.

With this Aristotelian distinction, further insight can be gained into what the character of the individual public scholar ought to be and how a flourishing civic academy would be dependent on that character. In other words, what characterial *virtues* should a public scholar strive to cultivate, and how should those *virtues* be incorporated within a civic academy?

Though the development of a comprehensive virtue ethic for the public scholar would extend beyond the bounds of this brief article, it is nevertheless worthwhile to at least initiate consideration of what some of the so-called "classical" virtues might prescribe. Moreover, it should be kept in mind that as with any virtue ethic, the prescriptions are not highly specific moral norms, but are simply guidelines. They are heuristic indices that should instigate further investigation as to how they might be more fully

understood and concretely applied within the circumstances of a particular public scholar's character and situation. In this way, the virtues are aspirational; they pose characterial ideals, but it is up to individual public scholars to interpret and instantiate what the virtues might mean for them and their work.

Temperance has already been cited as the "classical" virtue that encourages the balanced self-examination through which public scholars can shed academic hubris and undertake their work without the arrogance of a reformer ideologue or the condescending expertise of a social engineer. The classical virtues of fortitude, prudence, justice, and hope can offer additional indices for public scholars' formation of character.

Fortitude is the virtue of courage, the strength of mind and character to take a "noble" risk and persevere in the face of adversity. For public scholars, such courage would be the willingness to place their abilities at the service of public interests. The philosopher Gabriel Marcel describes this willingness as *disponibilité*,[7] making oneself available to others or, in this context, available to listen to, understand, and act with the public. To borrow a phrase from David Mathews, the public scholar "stands with"[8] and not "above" the public, which implies that the public scholar is proactively responsive to the public's interests. Public scholars should not be merely reactive to the public's interests, but they should aim to help the public discern whether, why, and how its interests can be directed at strengthening and serving the common good of the democratic polity.

...public scholars risk the scorn of the public that might be distrustful of intellectual academic elites who choose to mix with the common folk.

However, in taking such a noble risk, public scholars might face various adversities. First of all, they might suffer the scorn of the "traditional" academy by being accused of neglecting their professional scholarly development in favor of a sort of popularized research and writing or unscholarly community service. Second, public scholars risk the scorn of the public that might be distrustful of intellectual academic elites who choose to mix with the common folk. Since such mixing is not usual, the public might suspect that the scholar is there either to "engineer" or study them. And finally, in listening to the public's interests, public scholars might hear things they would rather not accept. For

instance, a scholar who is personally committed to abortion rights might hear a clear, distinct, and overwhelming public voice opposing partial birth abortion. In such a case, courage would be necessary for the scholar to maintain his or her balance, continue to attempt to help the public assess its moral interest in respect to the common good, and not endeavor to impose his or her own will on the public's moral interest.

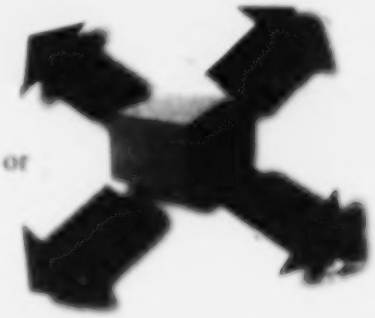
Prudence is the ability, the practical wisdom, to make right choices in personal and social situations. For the public scholar, this practical wisdom would principally entail being able to discriminate between political and politicized choice-options, and avoiding the selection of any politicized options. Although the very aim of public scholarship and the civic academy is to serve the citizenry, the common good of the body politic, deciding to champion politicized causes transforms a public scholar into a reformer ideologue. But, what in this context would be the difference between political and politicized options?

It is, for example, entirely possible to engage the public's understanding of affirmative action without choosing to endorse or disparage specific quota-driven government affirmative action programs. The merit or demerit of such specific programs is a matter of politicized debate, the controversial stuff with which partisan politicians build their campaign platforms. However, the issue of affirmative action itself is a political *and* moral issue that bears directly on the common good of a polity. It is fundamentally a matter of whether individual citizens are willing to act affirmatively to eradicate any racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice they may have within themselves or they may experience in society. Though there are some prejudiced citizens who staunchly maintain their racial, ethnic, or gender biases (or, in some cases, even bigoted hatreds), is it likely that most citizens harbor such strong prejudices? Can citizens' expressed willingness to act affirmatively to eliminate prejudice in themselves and their social experiences for the sake of their nation's common good be encouraged by a public scholar without pushing citizens to take a stand on politicized government programs? Prudence would prescribe that a public scholar should precisely offer such encouragement and eschew efforts to reform a citizen's politicized ideology.

Justice is the most ambiguous of the virtues because there are at least four different types and it is sometimes difficult to ascertain which type is most relevant to a given situation. Commutative

Contributive justice calls for citizens to become stewards, caretakers of their polity to ensure that its civic ideals are maintained.

justice is the justice of determining fair exchanges, so that no party in some sort of economic transaction is defrauded or exploited. Compensatory justice involves adjudicating compensation, usually economic, for a party to whom some wrong (e.g., an unjust economic transaction, or a violation of civil or human rights) was done in the past. *Distributive justice requires* determination of what is an equitable distribution of certain resources, goods, or services among members of a society. However, it is the virtue of contributive justice that is perhaps most relevant to the public scholar.



Contributive justice calls for citizens to become stewards, caretakers of their polity to ensure that its civic ideals are maintained. Contributive justice is premised on the norm of civic obligation in that citizenship itself requires active participation in the polity for the sake of its common good. Contributive justice prescribes that citizenship should not be a passive "spectator" posture.

Contributive justice is exactly the type of justice public scholars should nurture as a virtue. Scholars who realize their obligations of citizenship become committed to fostering the democratic processes and ideals with which our polity flourishes. Such scholars become empowered in the sense that they are able to marshal their talents to contribute to the public's understanding of what their own citizenship means and the obligations it entails. Moreover, it is only when contributive justice has been developed as a virtue that public scholars will be able to ascertain prudently whether or how the other types of justices should be advanced.

Commutative, compensatory, and distributive justice all pertain to determining what is just in specific economic or political situations, and in this way they all evoke commitment to specific causes. But, the more specific the cause, the more likely it can become a politicized cause. Whereas, with contributive justice the public scholar focuses on the larger interests of active citizenship and the common good of the polity. Therefore, by initially cultivating the virtue of contributive justice, public scholars will have established for themselves a sense of the "bigger picture," namely, what is required of participatory citizenship for the common good. They will then be best able to determine whether or how

the other types of justices should be applied to adjudicate specific political and economic situations without imprudently committing to such situations as politicized causes.

The last virtue to consider is hope, which at the outset must be distinguished from optimism and what is sometimes identified as hope's opposite, pessimism. Both optimism and pessimism issue from egotistical impulses. The optimist proclaims, "The *world* (i.e., their personal situations, community, society, etc.) will be what I will!" Optimists are convinced that their agendas will triumph. Optimists will work indefatigably for their causes because they are sure they are right and with their prodigious talents, they will be successful. Pessimists, also motivated by ego-impulses, lament, "Woe is me, the *world* is not what I will!" Because their agendas have failed, pessimists soothe their damaged egos by becoming cynical critics or wallowing in self-indulgent pity.

Hope is the humble confidence that good will ultimately emerge....

Hope, however, is not ego-motivated; indeed, it is an ego-effacing virtue wherein the volition "what I want should be done" is supplanted by the disposition "whatever is best should happen." Hope is the humble confidence that good will ultimately emerge because hope defers to principles, truths, and ideals that are greater than what any individual ego can will to triumph in his or her *world*.

Hope, for the public scholar, would cancel and transcend any vestige of academic hubris and dispose the public scholar to place faithful trust in the democratic principles, truths, and ideals that found our polity. Still, such fidelity is not an inert fatalism but a "creative fidelity"[9] through which the public scholar actively contributes to invigorating the public's sense of citizenship, to clarifying the public's interests, and to deliberating about civically responsible ways for the public to act on its interests. With hope, public scholars defer to the order of democracy and respectfully stand with the public as citizen servants of the common good.

Though just a sketch of a virtue ethic has been offered, it should be clear that without such an ethic the purposes of the public scholar could all too easily be misconstrued as or even actually become a reformist ideology. The possibility of actualizing an effective and respected civic academy within the institution of higher education depends on the characters of the public scholars who would fashion it. And, the fruitful development of the public scholars' characters depends on whether they cultivate the virtuous dispositions that will enable them to stand with the public while working for the common good of our democratic polity.

References

[1] It is interesting to note that although Sartre embraced "Marxist" ideals of liberation and overcoming "class struggles," he did dissociate himself from a "vulgar Marxism" whose notions of social determinism undermined affirming the radical freedom of the individual. In fact, in his later years, Sartre described his politics as a "libertarian socialism." See: Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982) pp. 494-5.

[2] Alan Wolfe, "The Promise and the Flaws of Public Scholarship," *Higher Education Exchange,* 1997, pp. 37-43.

[3] Ibid., p. 41.

[4] See articles by Jay Rosen, Jean Cameron, David Mathews, and others in *Higher Education Exchange,* 1997.

[5] From the Agenda for the "Seminar on the Professions and Public Life," sponsored by the Kettering Foundation, L'Enfant Plaza, Washington, D.C., June 25-26, 1998.

[6] See Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics,* Bk. I: Ch. 2-4.

[7] This notion of *disponibilité* can be found throughout the work of Gabriel Marcel (1888-1973).

[8] See *Standing with the Public: The Humanities and Democratic Practice,* edited by James Veninga and Noëlle McAfee (Dayton, OH: Kettering Foundation Press, 1997).

[9] Gabriel Marcel coined the term "creative fidelity" that appears in many of his writings but is specifically developed in *Creative Fidelity* (Farrar, Straus and Co., 1964).

THE PRACTICE OF THE PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL

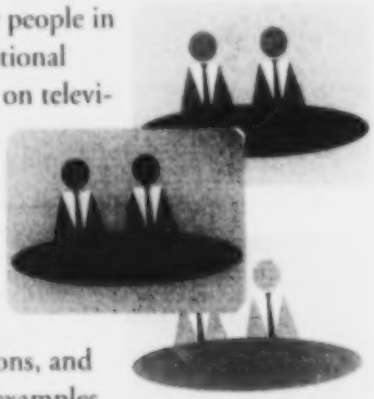
By Edward Royce

Numerous observers in recent years, critical of the relative isolation of academic intellectuals from the larger public sphere, have called for the revival of the "public intellectual." This term typically refers to a well-known writer who publishes books and essays on topics of broad concern targeted to a general audience of educated readers. The "New York intellectuals" of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s are commonly cited as the exemplary public intellectuals. The preeminence of this example, however, obscures the variety of ways in which intellectuals might play a public role, implies a conception of the relevant public as consisting exclusively of serious readers, and engenders a limited vision of who public intellectuals are and what public intellectuals do.

This paper is part of a larger project intended to reconsider the idea of the public intellectual and recover its potential as a guide to combining academic scholarship and public activism. I have pursued this project by interviewing professors in the social sciences and humanities who have sought to make their knowledge and expertise more accessible, relevant, and available to nonacademic audiences, and who are otherwise actively involved as intellectuals in public life. One objective of this research, which offers a unique empirical vantage point on the work of publicly active academics, is to highlight the variety of ways of being a public intellectual. Instead of constructing an ideal image of the public intellectual or putting forward an exemplary figure as the one-best model, I set out to explore public intellectuals at work, to describe their practices and experiences, what they do and how they do it. This more empirically grounded strategy provides a picture of public intellectuals, so to speak, *from below*. The advantage of this approach is that it has the potential to yield some useful lessons and contribute toward a better understanding of how academics might engage in more publicly relevant intellectual work.

Social Critics and Public Intellectuals

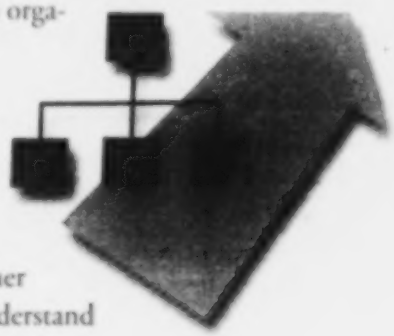
The conventional view typically equates the public intellectual with the prominent social critic. This conception has the disadvantage of limiting the role of public intellectual to famous writers and restricting the practice of the public intellectual to social criticism. While the social critic performs an invaluable role, there are many other ways to be a public intellectual; and most academics can more easily and effectively intervene in the public arena through other means. Social criticism, in addition, has the disadvantage of being addressed mainly to the highly educated segment of the public. Academics committed to reaching a broader audience, beyond just serious readers, will have to discover alternative ways to become publicly active. The people I interviewed, for example, engaged in a wide variety of practices, they participated in numerous forms of public outreach, and they targeted many different kinds of audiences. They wrote books and articles intended for a general public; they engaged in research, lobbying, and testifying in an effort to influence public policy; they set up classes or workshops for people in their communities and organized educational forums on topical issues; they appeared on television and radio talk shows; they spoke to or joined in formal discussions with nonacademic groups; they conducted activist or participatory research projects; and they supplied expert advice, information, and research materials to community groups, political organizations, and other lay constituencies. More specific examples include: a historian participating in a public history project in a predominantly Puerto Rican community with the intention of raising awareness about local housing problems; a psychologist conducting antiracism workshops for educators, church groups, and other organizations; and a historian using her skills as a writer and speaker and her connections to public health professionals and community organizations to turn the public spotlight on the high incidence of AIDS among African-American women.



In contrast to well-known social critics, most of the academics I interviewed are oriented toward local or specialized audiences. They are more likely to be involved with people in their own com-

munities than a putative national public; and they are more likely to work with groups interested in or organized around specific issues (e.g., the environment, homelessness, inequality, etc.) than be known to the readers of the *New Yorker*, the *Village Voice*, or the *New York Review of Books*. In one case, for example, a sociologist initiated a "community-based" research project in a poor Latino neighborhood bordering her university. In the course of her research, community residents urged her to focus on local housing conditions, referring to this as "our biggest problem." In collaboration with colleagues, students and community residents, she designed and carried out a housing study. She helped produce a video on local housing conditions; she organized a conference at her university that brought together academics, community people, lawyers, and political activists; she and her colleagues prepared several technical reports on local housing conditions, which they forwarded to relevant government agencies; and she distributed "fact sheets" to residents in the community to assist them in their own political organizing efforts. "My purpose," she says, "is to use what skills I have to bring the concerns of Latino community members — who don't have a forum to do it themselves — to bring that to policymakers, to people who will make decisions at a local level."

For many of my respondents, as this example illustrates, the objective of their efforts is less to engage in conventional social criticism than to use their intellectual capital to inform, educate, and empower ordinary citizens. One economist, for example, is involved in a program established to help political activists and other people in the community better understand current economic issues. What participants gain from this, she says, is "a sense of some empowerment, some self-confidence about economics," which they can then apply in their own political efforts. She describes, for example, how "there's been a big increase in organizing around international issues like NAFTA." But "international economics is pretty technical — strong dollar, weak dollar, interest-rate politics, balance of payments deficits." She and her colleagues assist people to understand



this "tricky stuff." What they get out of it is "a better sense of how to pick their way through the conceptual minefield." In another case, a political scientist, who does a lot of public speaking, explains that while he always tries to convey certain ideas, represent a standpoint and persuade his audiences, he also has the more modest ambition of simply stimulating people to "think critically about things. One of the values I try to embody in this act itself [as public intellectual] is to raise people's ability to disagree with me on rational grounds and to agree with me on rational grounds." Another economist tries to support the political efforts of lobby groups, community organizations, and advocates on diverse issues. For a while she focused on issues of tax equity. Along with colleagues and activists, she put together written material, gave talks, engaged in educational efforts, "translated" technical economic articles into understandable English, and supplied useful data.

These examples illustrate the point that academics can play a valuable public role and can make worthwhile political contributions through means other than social criticism. They show that the role of public intellectual is not confined to famous writers addressing a national audience of serious readers. And they suggest that public intellectuals can work *with* those subject to power as well as *against* those who exercise power. One economist articulates this alternative vision of the public intellectual. While she has written articles for national periodicals, she emphasizes the value of being engaged in community work with local publics, where intellectuals play a supportive role, outside the national limelight.

> Having been engaged in this kind of activity for roughly 20 years, I most appreciate the people [academics] that have kind of settled down in one community and had kind of a long-term relationship to that community. I think that those are the people that have a real constituency, that can really make change. Those are the people who are really holding the line.

While sometimes functioning as social critics, the public intellectuals in my study, as these cases illustrate, participate in a variety of different public activities. In general, they seek to establish a more visible intellectual presence in the public sphere; but more specifically they try to support the efforts of local community activists, to promote specific political policies and reforms, and sometimes just to encourage people to consider information,

ideas, and perspectives that rarely gain a serious hearing in the dominant public discourse. The conventional model of the public intellectual, narrowly defined to include only prominent social critics, overlooks the variety of public roles available to academics.

Independent Intellectual and Public Intellectuals

Social critics typically relate to the public in one direction only, as writers to readers, making use of their knowledge and critical skills to enlighten and instruct. Their connection to the public is distant, impersonal, and highly mediated. The work of public intellectuals other than social critics, however, often entails a different relationship to lay audiences, a more reciprocal connection to the public. Such public intellectuals perform their roles, as do many of my respondents, in settings that permit or necessitate face-to-face encounters and involve interaction and collaboration with nonacademic groups. They are participants in a more open-ended conversation, teaching others, trying to inform, persuade and mobilize, but learning from them as well. To be a public intellectual, one economist says, "it takes the work of working with people." Some of the academics I interviewed, for example, are involved in participatory or activist research projects. They seek to bring in, as coparticipants in the research process, the people being studied, and to employ the research experience and its findings to educate participants, both academics and lay people, and to promote social change.

What sustains their efforts is ... the supposition that their public interventions are part of a larger, collective project.

In contrast to the conventional image of the public intellectual as an independent scholar, an outsider or marginal figure, many of the people I interviewed emphasized the importance to their efforts of a collective context, consisting of connections to other intellectuals as well as to community groups, nonacademic organizations, and political activists. Their public interventions consist less of the weighty missive of the solitary individual, than, as one of my respondents puts it, "the work of ants." What sustains their efforts is not so much their individual victories nor certainly national recognition, but the supposition that their public interventions are part of a larger, collective project. "You're always struggling from a marginal position," one economist observes. "The way I've always approached my work is to say, obviously, if I take what I'm doing by itself, it doesn't matter, it's a waste of time. So I have to assume that I am one part of something bigger. And, of course, that is a correct assumption." A

sociologist explains, similarly, that "one of the things that kept my spirits up" was the understanding that "I'm part of a larger group, and we're just sort of keeping the fires going." For one economist, it was a matter of preference to "operate under collective structures." But for the kind of public work undertaken by many other academics, the position of independent intellectual was not a feasible option. "Some sort of collective framework," one economist argues, is crucial for intellectuals who want to be publicly active. The "only way you can really succeed," he insists, is by having "a social support network of people trying to do the same thing."

> You can't by and large do it by yourself. It isn't the force of your ideas that's going to carry you through. It's some sort of group involvement, whether that is a group involvement with other people like yourself, that is other economists, sociologists, whatever you are, or connections to a political movement. Ideally, one has both. That's what you need.

A political scientist also emphasizes the value of being closely involved with other people, "both inside and outside academia, organized in some way."

> It's just, I think, very important to have like-minded people with whom to exchange experiences and get suggestions that are on the spot and react to immediate situations or difficulties you may be having, and that kind of thing. To do it all by oneself is very hard. I don't know what I would have done without that organization. It really helped me a lot.

For an economist, similarly, being involved in communities and groups of various kinds serves to "counterbalance" institutional and professional pressures, making it easier to pursue a career path that departs from the academic mainstream. His work with community activists and other politically engaged academics, a political scientist stated, "just reminded me of what the hell I was in all this for."

Intellectuals who work closely with nonacademic groups have to establish trust and rapport in order to be effective; they have to demonstrate some level of commitment to the relevant communi-

ties; and they have to negotiate the divide that often exists between academics and lay people, especially when status differences are also evident. Public intellectuals who are determined to maintain intellectual independence and critical distance cannot be successful at this kind of work. A more complete involvement in the community is typically required. As one economist observed, to be an effective public intellectual, one cannot "come on as if 'I know everything and you know nothing.'" She tried to get fully involved in the groups she worked with and not just participate in her role as expert authority. "I become a member of groups. And I volunteer to help them stuff envelopes. You have to be a participant. You have to be part of the community." A sociologist makes the same point, declaring that "you have to build credibility by being part of that community. You have to be able to speak in their language." People, one respondent states, "do want what professionals can give them, if they know those professionals are really dedicated, if they're not opportunists, if they're really believers in the movement." Another sociologist, who helped set up a conference on the global economy for community residents, recalled that local people were "a little intimidated" coming to the university. But they subsequently discovered that the academic organizers "were user-friendly types who were willing to share information and give out their phone numbers and say 'If you want to pursue this further, call me, we'll do something about this.'" This helped build trust and solidify ties between academics and publics, resulting in the creation of "permanent bonds," such that residents felt comfortable about calling on participating academics for further information and expert opinion.

Experts, Specialists, and Public Intellectuals

While it is typically assumed that only generalists are eligible to play the role of public intellectual, my research shows that expertise and specialization rather than hindering academics from performing as public intellectuals, has a number of practical advantages. First, the expertise derived from specialization enhances the ability of intellectuals to gain public access. The generalist option, after all, is typically available only to the most

prominent figures. Noam Chomsky, for example, can attract a public audience willing to listen to him talk about almost anything. Most other academics, however, lacking name recognition, require the credibility and visibility that is conferred by expertise; their credentials are their only ticket into the public arena. "If you have an expertise," one of my respondents observes, "you can be called upon by different groups, and this includes some of the church groups, or labor groups, or citizens' action groups. It's useful to have an arena in which you're recognized as a so-called expert." Several of the people I interviewed, in fact, pursued their Ph.D.s precisely because they believed that by certifying themselves as experts they could more effectively play a public role. As one historian states: "I saw getting my Ph.D. as a way to have more influence as an activist, to have more credibility, as opposed to my views being seen as just sort of 'my opinion.'" An economist makes a similar observation: "It was clear that people looked to experts; expert required becoming a Ph.D. I think my project was to do the work I'm doing [popular economics education] and the Ph.D. was a vehicle to do it." Having specific areas of expertise, she believes, opened doors for her into the public arena and improved her ability to act as a public intellectual.

The challenge "is to take ideas and write about them in a way in which they make sense to most people and are digestible to most people."

Second, specialists, precisely because of their expertise, may also be better able to convey ideas, impart information, communicate clearly, and make a persuasive case to nonacademic groups. Several of the people I interviewed saw themselves, at least in one of their public roles, as popularizers, trying to translate technical ideas for a public audience. One economist, for example, writes regularly for a popular economics magazine that is read by, among others, educators, students, political activists, and people in the trade union movement. He describes what he does as "making theory for public use." The challenge, he says, "is to take ideas and write about them in a way in which they make sense to most people and are digestible to most people." Through such popular writing he hopes to help create something of a counterweight to conventional economic ideas. Writing about economics for a popular audience, to be done well, requires an ability — which this economist found difficult to learn — to express oneself clearly about issues that are often complex and technical, and it requires a deep knowledge of both mainstream economics and the writings of its critics. Good translators have to be well versed in the language from which they are translating. This work of popular

translation, which is difficult enough even when one has the requisite expertise, is not something that most generalists are in a position to carry off effectively.

Third, intellectuals with expertise on matters of public relevance possess a valuable resource; they have something that is potentially useful and interesting to lay audiences. This, too, increases opportunities to participate in the public sphere and to make a public contribution. Because of their expertise, specialists are able to intervene and be helpful in ways that generalists cannot. A sociologist trained in epidemiology, for example, was able to lend his expertise to community groups in support of their claims against businesses charged with illegal dumping of toxic waste. He saw himself as "pushing what I thought was a solid, well backed-up position based on good empirical evidence, but also based on political action." In another case, an economist wrote a book that was widely reviewed in the popular press, as well as in academic journals. From "being a person of basic obscurity," she found herself "thrust onto the public stage." Her book included technical material and sophisticated analyses of quantitative data. But it was reasonably readable, targeted by her publisher to the "educated layman"; it addressed timely issues concerning work in American society; and it "hit a nerve, it just exploded." She, subsequently, did numerous radio talk shows; she appeared on national television programs; she received more requests for interviews than she could manage; she was frequently called by reporters of major newspapers to comment on economic issues; and she regularly got invited to speak before nonacademic groups. What gave her the opportunity to play this public role, to emphasize, was precisely her demonstrated technical competence on a specific issue of public importance.

...academics with expertise in specialized fields can make an important public contribution.

Fourth, expertise can also have strategic value, helping intellectuals to position themselves so they can influence public policy. In one case, for example, a political scientist chose to specialize on Latin American politics because he thought it was an area where "a relatively small number of well-informed people can actually make a difference, in terms of building a bridge between Latin America and the more general U.S. public." He had been studying Nicaraguan politics, too, but subsequently opted to focus exclusively on Mexico. "That was a time when almost no U.S. intellectuals had any idea what was going on in contemporary Mexican politics. If you look for an analysis of what's going on in

Mexico, there were just a handful of people at that time." He had been "very impressed by the strategic role that a few people, who were at the head of the curve in the late seventies, played" in the debate over U.S. intervention in Central America and in what became the Solidarity and anti-intervention movements of the 1980s. His objective, by cultivating his expertise on Mexican politics, was to carve out a similar role for himself.

An empirical examination of public intellectuals at work reveals that academics with expertise in specialized fields can make an important public contribution. Most of the people I interviewed managed to influence public policy, gain a hearing before nonacademic audiences, and otherwise play a public role precisely because of their technical competence and expertise. They became public intellectuals on the basis of their training and knowledge in such specialized areas as, for example, welfare reform, environmental policy, immigration, housing discrimination, tax policy, campaign finance reform, election systems, and labor issues. There is nothing inherent in specialization that precludes academics from serving as public intellectuals; and for many professors the expertise that comes from specialization provides them with a valuable resource and a passport for gaining entrance into the public arena.

Conclusion

Empirical research into the practices of publicly active academics might help divert thinking about public intellectuals onto a more constructive track. The benefit of inquiring into examples of public intellectuals at work comes from their practical relevance: they reveal possibilities, model courses of action, and stimulate thinking about alternatives to an insular professionalism. Empirical research on publicly active professors can serve to illuminate opportunities available for other academics also to become public intellectuals. For those interested in the relationship between intellectuals and the public, there is no better place to begin than by examining the experiences of academics who are already traveling back and forth between the ivory tower and the public sphere.

TOWARD A PUBLIC SCIENCE:

Building a New Social Contract between Science and Society

By Scott Peters, Nicholas Jordan, and Gary Lemme

American higher education at the close of the 1990s is showing signs of a civic awakening. A new vision of the public role and value of scholarship, the central work of the professoriate, is beginning to emerge. This vision was put forth in the late Ernest Boyer's call for a "scholarship of engagement," where academic institutions seek to become "more vigorous partner[s] in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic, and moral problems" (Boyer, 1996: 11). It has also surfaced in calls published in the Kettering Foundation's *Higher Education Exchange* for a "public scholarship," where scholars stand as partners with other citizens in producing knowledge of value in addressing a variety of public issues and problems.

At least one institution, Oregon State University (OSU), has embraced this emerging civic vision. In 1995, OSU adopted a completely new definition of scholarship, along with an extensive revision of its tenure and promotion policies (Weiser, 1997). A central aim of these changes, which encourage and reward a more publicly engaged form of scholarly work, is to increase the institution's relevance and efficacy in helping Oregon's citizens to address important public issues and problems. OSU's aim reflects Boyer's strong assertion that "at no time in our history has the need been greater for connecting the work of the academy to the social and environmental challenges beyond the campus" (Boyer, 1990: xii).

OSU's experience — recently featured as the centerpiece of "Scholarship Unbound," a national conference cosponsored by OSU, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, and the American Association for Higher Education — adds weight and momentum to the call for the development of a public scholarship. While this kind of scholarship is appealing to many in the humanities and social sciences (Veninga and McAfee, 1997), it is also capturing the interest of faculty in the so-called "hard" or "natural" sciences. One who has exhibited such interest is Jane Lubchenco, a professor in the Department of Zoology at OSU, who recently served as president of the American Association for the Advancement of

Science (AAAS).

In her presidential address at the 1997 Annual Meeting of AAAS, Lubchenco scanned the array of global changes affecting societies, environments, and economies, and asked whether the scientific community was adequately prepared to address them. Her answer was "no." With a nod to vigorous and explicit commitments on the part of scientists and scientific institutions to address major public challenges in times past, she issued a call for the scientific community to respond to global change by formulating a "new Social Contract" between science and society. She suggested that such a contract,

> should be predicated upon the assumptions that scientists will (i) address the most urgent needs of society, in proportion to their importance; (ii) communicate their knowledge and understanding widely in order to inform decisions of individuals and institutions; and....(iii) exercise good judgment, wisdom, and humility.... It should express a commitment to harness the full power of the scientific enterprise in discovering knowledge, in communicating existing and new understanding to the public and to policymakers, and in helping society move toward a more sustainable biosphere (Lubchenco, 1998: 495).

Lubchenco's call for the building of a new social contract between science and society reveals a growing stirring among scientists, many of whom hold faculty positions at research universities, to assert and reclaim the larger public meaning and value of their work. But her call has implications for practice as well as meaning. At its heart, it is a call for scientists to connect the work of science with the work of citizenship. It is a call for the development of a *public science*, where science is seen as public work that builds the commonwealth.

Public science, as we envision it, is a form of public scholarship. It calls on scientists to enter into partnerships with citizens from other professions or sectors in work that closely links knowledge creation with public problem solving and policy-making. Lubchenco's new Social Contract proposal is in fact dependent on such partnerships. In her AAAS address, she suggested that,

> innovative mechanisms are needed to facilitate the investigation of complex, interdisciplinary problems that span multiple spatial and temporal scales; to

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> encourage interagency and international cooperation on societal problems; and to construct more effective bridges between policy, management, and science, as well as between the public and private sectors (Lubchenco, 1998: 495).

The creation of these innovative mechanisms requires professional scientists, in Lubchenco's words, to develop the "skills and savvy" necessary for working at the "policy-science interface." According to Lubchenco, the development of proficiency in such skills will require, among other things, changes in university curricula and rewards systems. In our view, such changes should be designed to encourage and reward scientists to infuse their work and institutions with the spirit of active citizenship.

Historical Roots of a Public Science

The dangers of a science disconnected from active citizenship, and the promise of one that is not disconnected, have long been recognized and named, not only by perceptive critics, but by public-minded scientists. T. Swann Harding, a scientist who served as editor of Scientific Publications for USDA's Office of Information, addressed this theme in a brilliant, farsighted essay published in USDA's 1940 *Yearbook of Agriculture*. In his essay, titled "Science and Agricultural Policy," Harding decried the lack of an organized "agency" to ensure a democratic, values-based linking of scientific research with public problem solving and policy-making. "Because we lack such an agency," he wrote, "confusion, disorder, and impoverishment tend to follow our unplanned, haphazard utilizations of scientific knowledge in commerce, industry, agriculture, and society generally."

Harding's critique of the prevailing professional culture in science was lucid and stinging. He detailed the evils of overspecialization, and of scientists' tendency to try to isolate themselves from public life, arguing that "rigid compartmentalization [has] sterilize[d] scientific knowledge by depriving scientific specialists of broad social vision." He wrote,

> few scientific specialists have progressive, intelligent opinions in fields outside their specialty. Very often they even lack the ability to express the results of their work in such a manner as to contribute to the normal life and growth of the community. A celibacy of intellect has characterized scientists that resembles the physical

> celibacy practiced by the learned of the Middle Ages. It often renders their professional organizations strangely ineffective (Harding, 1940: 1103).

Harding explicitly dismissed the "obsolete attitude" expressed by some of his peers that "scientists must remain wholly aloof from choices, values, and human relations, as scientists." He declared that "no scientist can entirely escape the stream of life. Knowledge is not what it should be unless it is permeated with a sense of values." Optimistically, he predicted that "the cult of scientific irresponsibility is on the way out." In its place, he called for the development of "a mechanism the function of which will be to put science to work to formulate and carry out programs in the spirit of democratic cooperation and better mutual understanding." A democratic spirit was important to Harding, for he was no technocrat calling for a rule by scientists. He emphasized that,

> The plain man's judgment too is important. The dirt farmer knows many things the phytopathologist never will know, and vice versa. The expert cannot dominate, but he must take his part in the formulation of agricultural and social policies, using the democratic process (Harding, 1940: 1103).

Harding's call for a democratic mechanism linking science and public life was an echo of earlier calls from scientists and educators working in American higher education. For example, it echoes Liberty Hyde Bailey, a world-renowned scientist who served as president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1926. In an essay published in 1916 titled "The Science Spirit in a Democracy," Bailey asked:

> What is the purpose and what the value of our widespread teaching of science if not that its mental attitude is to be applied in all the horizons of life? If this attitude were applied in public affairs we should forthwith have a new politics (Bailey, 1916: 22).

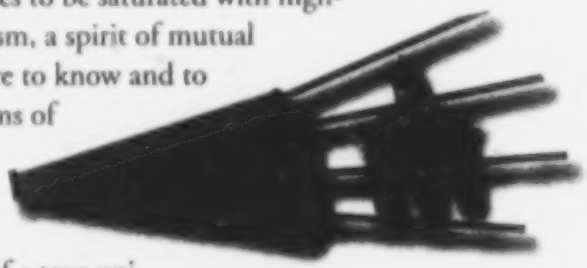
Bailey devoted his professional life to promoting and pursuing science as public work at many levels, including serving as dean of the New York State College of Agriculture at Cornell University from 1903-1913 and chair of President Theodore Roosevelt's 1908 Commission on Country Life. His pioneering work and civic vision in land grant education deeply influenced the early development of the national Cooperative Extension System.

Harding's call also echoes Lotus D. Coffman, president of the University of Minnesota from 1921-1938, who used his inaugural address to commit the university to supporting a public or civic-minded scientific scholarship at a time when such scholarship was under attack by those who were calling for distanced "objectivity." Early in his address, Coffman noted:

> There are still a few skeptics who maintain that a state university should be separate and independent....They would locate it on some Mount Olympus or sequester it in some secret place far from the sordid marts of trade and the buzzing confusion of the social and political worlds. Scholarship, in their opinion, should not be contaminated by contact with the activities of everyday life. A wall with wide and deep moat should separate the university. . . .(Coffman, 1934: 7).

Coffman emphatically disagreed with these "few skeptics." He declared that a state university's:

> very atmosphere breathes the spirit of helpfulness and of interest in the problems of men everywhere. Its graduates should live in a republic of minds that is not limited by time nor geographical boundaries. If this concept seems ideal it is none the less important for that reason. When a university ceases to be saturated with high-minded cosmopolitanism, a spirit of mutual helpfulness, and a desire to know and to understand the problems of the world, it will cease to be a university. . . . This great aim, this fundamental purpose of a true university, we must constantly proclaim from the housetops, that we do not lose sight of it (Coffman 1934: 21).



The central importance of this "great aim" was reflected in the official theme for the series of public addresses that were delivered on Coffman's inauguration day: "The University and the Commonwealth" (1921).

Public Science and the Emerging Civic Renewal Movement

The conviction that the work of scientists, or of any number of

Citizenship, if it is to be serious, cannot be relegated to the off-hours arena of civil society.

other professions, has or should have some direct relation to democratic citizenship is well rooted in American life (Boyte and Kari, 1996). However, this "civic professionalism," as some have called it (Sullivan, 1995; Mathews, 1996), has been obscured or marginalized by the development of professional cultures that position professionals as detached outsiders to public life. A key strand of an emerging civic renewal movement in the 1990s has begun to address this detachment, leading to calls, such as Lubchenco's, for a more publicly engaged professional practice.

The most visible core of the emerging civic renewal movement is a revitalized "civil society" grounded in various forms of voluntarism and service. While a revitalized civil society is important, without a work-centered grounding in professional and institutional life, the power of democratic citizenship will be greatly diminished (Boyte 1998). Citizenship, if it is to be serious, cannot be relegated to the off-hours arena of civil society. It must be brought inside institutions and patterns and practices of work. This important point was recently put forward by the National Commission on Civic Renewal (1998). In their final report, the commission argued that "democracy is neither a consumer good nor a spectator sport, but rather the work of free citizens, engaged in shared civic enterprises." Such work, as they envision it, is to be pursued in and through all forms of institutions.

The idea of a public science, like that of a public scholarship, is an expression of the nascent movement to link work and citizenship in academic institutions. Such a linking is surely necessary if these institutions are to effectively contribute to the development of a new "social contract" between science and society. Over the past two years, we have begun to build a coalition of faculty and staff at the University of Minnesota who share this conviction. The coalition's work to date has helped us to better understand the opportunities and difficulties for developing and practicing public science in a large land grant, research university.

The Practice of Public Science: Experiments at the University of Minnesota

The public science coalition at the University of Minnesota links a number of projects, each devoted to developing broad partnerships for knowledge discovery and policy-making related to pressing public problems. The coalition currently involves about 15 faculty and staff members from a variety of disciplines concerned with

...sustainable relationships between people and natural resources are only possible through the work of an active citizenry that attends to the human-nature relationship.

agriculture, natural resources, and community life. The group meets regularly to share work and experiences, and to promote collaborative research and policy-making that address complex natural resource issues.

Members of the coalition share three major premises. First, we believe that all scientists, especially those employed by the public, should actively strive to ensure that their work increases the commonwealth. We acknowledge that this requires scientists to engage in careful public deliberation and evaluation. Second, we believe that complex problems involving people and natural resources have (at least) economic, social, and environmental dimensions and, therefore, progress can be made only by synthesizing insights from different ways of knowing about these problems. For example, to improve control of farm pests, scientist knowledge and farmer knowledge must be effectively combined. Finally, we believe that sustainable relationships between people and natural resources are only possible through the work of an active citizenry that attends to the human-nature relationship. A vitally important role of scientific research is to develop and support society's capacity for this sort of active citizenship. Necessarily, such research will engage scientists in cooperative work with relevant sectors of society. Our coalition is working to realize the vision of collaborative public work embodied in these premises. Such work will lead scientists into arenas of governance and policy-making, bringing them to the science-policy interface that Lubchenco describes.

How is public science to be put into practice, and how might it help advance Lubchenco's proposal for a new social contract between science and society? First, we contend that in order to do science that addresses the most urgent needs of society, scientists must test their work with "extended peer communities" (Funtowicz and Ravetz, 1994) that bring a wide variety of knowledge to bear in evaluating ongoing and proposed science. These mechanisms for scientific direction setting are being developed in several European countries, and are gaining momentum in the United States under the banner of "community-based research"

... a second essential dimension of public science practice is willingness to participate in democratic policy-making, in which the scientific perspective is one among many.

(Sclove, Scammell, and Holland 1998). Such mechanisms are the most promising democratic means of ensuring the efficacy of public scientific institutions in return for their public support. We acknowledge that participatory policy and direction-setting mechanisms in science involve a tension between the authority and role of experts in scientific disciplines, and those of other citizens who have different forms of knowledge and expertise. Standards that guide operation of extended peer communities and other innovative mechanisms for setting science policy must take this tension into account.

In our view, a second essential dimension of public science practice is willingness to participate in democratic policy-making, in which the scientific perspective is one among many. Currently, most scientists are alienated from policy-making arenas (Safina, 1998). Scientists must enter these arenas, and must not limit their involvement to merely testifying their knowledge. We believe that scientists have an obligation to contribute their specialized knowledge as participants in governing. They must be willing to communicate their knowledge, engage in contestations regarding its validity and implications, form intentional relationships with allies, and otherwise participate actively in policy-making.

A third essential dimension concerns knowledge discovery. It is absolutely critical to develop knowledge that will enable citizens to address complex natural resource problems. As suggested above, we hold that the requisite knowledge can only be discovered collaboratively among holders of different forms of knowledge about relevant systems. Promising models for achieving this include the participatory ecosystem-based, natural-resource management approach developed in the Australian Landcare movement (Campbell, 1998).

Broadly, the public science coalition at the University of Minnesota is working to promote the civic forms of professional practice in science described above. More immediately, the coalition has three functions. First, it serves as a learning community where members study each other's work to hasten development of theory and practice. Second, the coalition seeks to exert influence within the university to advocate for scholarship that is aligned with the fundamental principles of public science. Therefore, we use organizing methods and other strategies to promote the work that we espouse. We believe that this political work will help advance the land grant university's historical mission of increasing

the commonwealth.

Third, the coalition works within a broader context, the Minnesota Active Citizenship Initiative (ACI). ACI is a statewide effort aimed at building a new basis for democratic governance through organizing public partnerships across an array of institutions. Through the practice of a new kind of organizing called "civic organizing" (Michels and Massengale, 1998), it provides a political vehicle that explicitly links the public science coalition with the broad work of civic renewal in Minnesota. Civic organizing is an evolving framework for provoking institutions to more rigorously and conscientiously examine whether and how their work increases the commonwealth, and to redirect their work accordingly. A particular emphasis of civic organizing is linking work across institutions to achieve broad-based civic renewal. Our working hypothesis is that civic organizing is a vital tool for establishing and maintaining public science.

The Potential of Public Science: The Case of the West Central Experiment Station

The potential of public science to help advance a new social contract between science and society is illustrated in recent work at the University of Minnesota's West Central Experiment Station at Morris, Minnesota. The station is a regional center for agricultural research, housing 15 university faculty members. Agricultural experiment stations are located in every state in the nation. Established in 1887 by the federal Hatch Act, they are key components of the national land grant university system.

During the past several years, the West Central Experiment Station has undergone a remarkable transformation in identity and purpose that embodies much of the spirit of public science. This transformation was brought about through a process of faculty-community deliberation initiated by the station's administration. Shortly after he arrived six years ago, the station's new director held a series of one-on-one conversations about the mission and work of the station with a broad range of individuals in west central Minnesota. Through these discussions, it became

apparent that many perceived that the social contract between the station and the region was not as strong as it ought to be. The fundamental concern was that the station's research was not adapting to rapid change in regional agriculture. University research agendas were seen as self-serving and outdated in focus.

A series of dialogues was held between the station's faculty and an independent standing advisory committee, in which the committee conveyed its concerns about the station's functioning. Faculty retreats were held to determine the best ways to utilize community input in establishing future direction. After much analysis and soul-searching, two interdisciplinary research foci were identified concerning animal production via grazing, and protection of water quality in an agricultural landscape. These foci integrated the work of all of the faculty into two coherent programs, and were seen by the advisory committee as having excellent potential to increase the commonwealth of the region and state.

The station's faculty has continued to collaborate with the advisory committee to shape the programs of the station. While the committee represents a wide range of "special" interests in the region, it has embraced a vision of the station as serving the commonwealth. The station explicitly aims to engage a wide range of local citizens and institutions in shaping, conducting, and assessing research and education projects that increase the region's overall quality of life. At the heart of this work is the goal of advancing a profitable, environmentally and socially sustainable agriculture. Continual engagement with the committee has built a strong base of support in the faculty for this civic focus, and the work of the faculty and station have evolved to support it along several dimensions.

All faculty, regardless of formal appointment, have become much more oriented to engaging with others outside the station.

First, the station has adopted its own standards of faculty evaluation, independent of evaluation that is done in the various academic departments in which faculty are tenured. These standards explicitly value interdisciplinary work in a variety of forms, substantially broadening the dominant emphasis on publications and grants as the main criteria of effective scholarship. Faculty engagement in partnerships with a wide variety of citizens and institutions is now regarded as a legitimate form of interdisciplinary work, and the attributes and accomplishments of these partnerships are named and evaluated. Faculty behavior has changed in a variety of respects so as to better function in these

new modes. All faculty, regardless of formal appointment, have become much more oriented to engaging with others outside the station. Station faculty are now taking leadership positions in research, moving away from the subservience to faculty on the main campus that was typical in the past. When evaluating candidates for open positions, faculty now give interpersonal skills and potential for interdisciplinary and public partnership work considerable weight.

Second, the station is now engaged in public science through a wide array of public partnerships. In knowledge discovery, the station has worked with the Chippewa River Whole-farm Planning Committee, a diverse coalition that unites agricultural and environmental interests concerned with water quality in an agricultural landscape. Together, the station and the committee have received major state funding for the project, through a process that required demonstration of substantial regional political support. The project funds a coordinated mix of on-farm and on-station research. Its success to date demonstrates the value of combining good, rigorous science with active public partnerships.

In policy-making, the station has nurtured the development of a new regional institution, the Minnesota Center for Agricultural Technology. The center will be located in a new facility under proposed construction at the station. It is being designed to bring together under one roof diverse agriculture-related enterprises, including nonprofit sustainable agriculture organizations, public agencies, and agricultural businesses dealing in both materials and information. Its explicit purpose is to foster sustainable agriculture-related development in the region. The center is a cooperative enterprise intended to encourage mutually beneficial relationships among its diverse members, ranging from economies of scale in officing to coordinated research and development efforts spanning a wide variety of interests and expertise. The center is an innovative policy-making mechanism, providing a forum in which diverse interests concerned with sustainable agricultural development can deliberate, negotiate differences, and take cooperative actions aimed at improving the future of the region.

Finally, the station is a key member of the West Central Regional Partnership, part of the Minnesota Active Citizenship Initiative that is also addressing the status of west-central Minnesota on a regional scale. This partnership brings together persons working in sectors of state and local government, business,

education, faith communities, and research and development. The station's contribution to this effort includes the appointment of a new University of Minnesota Extension Service faculty member whose responsibility is to link the resources of the station and extension to the efforts of the regional partnership.

Reflections on the Work of the Coalition

As the above case shows, the work of building a new social contract between science and society through the development of a public science is already well under way in west central Minnesota. Our reflections on this and other cases with our public science coalition colleagues has led us to a number of conclusions. First, the premises of public science appear to appeal strongly to many faculty. However, the dominant informal culture and the formal faculty evaluation and promotion criteria for many academic departments and colleges either do not support public science or are not currently adequate for assessing much of the new professional practice that it will require. Therefore, powerful disincentives stand against engagement in public science, particularly for faculty at vulnerable points in their careers.

Broadly speaking, faculty are not socialized to take bold public action.

In our view, the failure of faculty peer evaluation standards to support public science, despite its strong appeal to faculty, is a paradox that is best understood as a political failure. Changing present standards of peer evaluation and promotion requires a substantial effort (e.g., Oregon State University), or special political circumstances (e.g., the West Central Experiment Station of the University of Minnesota). It requires serious, ongoing attention and leadership from faculty, administrators, and stakeholders at a variety of levels.

Organizing faculty to address the above issues is one of the goals of the public science coalition. In our view, honorable and effective political activity within and beyond academic institutions is an essential part of academic and scholarly life. Yet, this view is clearly countercultural in most academic settings. Broadly speaking, faculty are not socialized to take bold public action. Faculty are encouraged to focus mainly on their individual research efforts. Until the role of citizen is reinvigorated in university life, even faculty sympathetic to public science will struggle to find time to engage in organizing work.

Accordingly, we have found that recruitment of faculty to active organizing roles in the coalition is a slow process, even

though most members enthusiastically recognize the value of a strategic coalition. Still, organizing roles must be played if the project is to succeed in its goal of influencing academic policy-making to support the premises of public science. Recruitment of active organizers is a key factor limiting the coalition at present. To attract faculty who are already very busy, the time costs of organizing activities must be distributed over a sufficiently large pool of people.

In summary, the public science coalition has found that our fundamental themes and premises are powerful and appealing to many faculty. We have found that the vision of public science meets with strong approval among persons attempting to practice civic professionalism in other societal sectors, suggesting that public science may serve as a banner under which to sustain public support of university science. We have found willing partners in ongoing experimentation with "innovative mechanisms" for governing and policy-making across major social sectors. We are testing whether civic organizing is a vehicle that will help us to advance public science.

Such organizing and experimentation typifies the work that scientists must undertake to find their way to a substantial new social contract with society. If we are to succeed in this deeply important project, the innovative mechanisms that will allow scientists to offer and fulfill such a contract must be conceptualized, tested, and refined. If done well, this work will contribute vitally to the development of public scholarship, and thus to the ongoing struggle of realizing the civic mission of the academy.

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FACULTY CITIZENSHIP AND THE LIBERAL ARTS

By Douglas Challenger and Craig Platt

In articles for the *Higher Education Exchange* and a recent book entitled *Standing with the Public*, David Mathews has described a set of overlapping trends that may be moving higher education toward a new kind of involvement in public life. One is a shift in the epistemology that underlies our scholarship — a shift from the technical rationalism of the positivist paradigm of knowledge as neutral, value-free, and objective that had been valued for the past century or more as the hallmark of academic truth — to an appreciation of a more public form of communicative reason that sees knowledge as socially constructed and emerging from "interrogating shared human experience." This shift to a new epistemology is related to a revival in the field of rhetoric where deliberative dialogue is being understood as a mode of communication that is rich in its capacity to combine dialectically both subjectivity and objectivity, reflection and action, to re-create reality. These new developments are leading many to rethink the relationship between the "expert" and the public, the teacher and the student, and its underlying presumption that there are those who know and those who don't.

Another trend Mathews cites as particularly seminal for forging new foundations in the organization of higher education is the recent work of many academics that is reconceptualizing the public as civil society — the host of free associations that stand between the individual and the ruling apparatus of the state as the place where people do important public work. This trend began in the Central and East European countries as a bulwark for dissident movements during the period when state communism was in fast decline and is now being reconceptualized in both the East and West as the foundation for more open, prosperous, and democratic societies. A core insight emerging from these studies is that what makes a community or a public healthy is not its degree of homogeneity, but rather how vital and interconnected are its citizens and associations — how integrated are its various parts. The communist state was a full blown experiment in an expert

...by interrogating our own shared experience, we are beginning to gain some new wisdom about our professional roles and institutional practice.

society rooted in the scholarship of positivism and in a disregard for wide, democratic participation from its people, and its complete collapse is probably the most compelling evidence for a need to rethink our epistemology and the role of intellectuals. As a result of having lived through this great transformation in formerly communist Europe, Václav Havel, David Mathews observes, has become "a champion of incremental improvement continuously modified by shared experience." Havel suggests that governing not be the province of experts and elites only, but that it include the broad input of citizens and their associations, and that policy be framed and carried out with the humility of an undogmatic and experimental attitude.

Prompted in part by these trends, some academics have begun to engage in more public forms of scholarship — not simply as providers of expertise or extractors of information from the public, but as participants in the exchanges by which citizens collectively frame and understand issues and problems. Ultimately, in Mathews' analysis, some academics are coming to see their role as a partnership with the public in the production of knowledge and "practical wisdom."

At our own institution, after a period of immense change that has centered around the development of a general education core curriculum with the civic-oriented theme of individual and community (I and C), we and our colleagues have begun to experience some nascent versions of these broader trends. What may be especially instructive about our experience is that, truth be told, probably none of us fully understood the path we were taking when we began. It is only now, by interrogating our own shared experience, that we are beginning to gain some new wisdom about our professional roles and institutional practice. As we reflect on our experience, especially with these broader trends in mind, we recognize both the obstacles to and positive outcomes that can accompany a new model of faculty citizenship. In what follows, our hope is to share some local history and, more importantly, some practical knowledge that may be useful to others who are engaged in similar work.

An Interdisciplinary Core and an Emerging Public Mission

During the mid to late 1980s the faculty of Franklin Pierce College, like the faculties at many other institutions nationwide, underwent several unfruitful efforts at general education reform. Finally, during the 1990-1991 academic year, an intensive review process under the leadership of a new dean led to the adoption of an academic reform known as the Pierce Plan. The centerpiece of the plan was the outline for a new liberal education core program, which would replace the college's existing distribution requirements almost entirely with a sequence of interdisciplinary courses organized around the theme of individual and community (see pages 52, 53 for details on the core curriculum).

While the theme of the new core program certainly implied a civic focus, it would be fair to say that the faculty generally did not approach this initiative first and foremost as a commitment to civic education or as a decision to change the mission of the institution with regard to public life. Rather, our most salient goal was to create a more cohesive, integrated curriculum. As far as the impact this new approach would have on our own professional roles, what was clear (to some extent) was that we would be obliged to work with one another in some new and unfamiliar ways. Few of us had significant prior experience with interdisciplinary study, with team teaching, or even with the collaborative development of course syllabi. With the adoption of the Pierce Plan, which included only broad paragraph descriptions of the new courses in the core program, we were launched into an immersion-style education in interdisciplinary, collaborative curriculum design. The most intensive work occurred in the first three years, when the basic shapes of courses were hashed out by faculty teams in extended summer workshops, but the same sort of collaboration has become a normal (though still challenging) part of the faculty routine as courses are evaluated and revised by their teaching teams from year to year.

Although the goal of enhancing the college's public mission may not have been primary when we first embarked on this journey, it seems clear in retrospect that the core program helped to create a kind of institutional trajectory toward civic education and (for some members of the faculty) public scholarship. In large part, this movement has been driven by the presence of the individual and community theme itself. Originally conceived more as

...the phrase individual and community itself has shaped the way we talk about ourselves as an institution....

a device for enhancing coherence across the curriculum, the theme has helped to shape the content of certain courses in the direction of an increasingly conscious effort at education for citizenship. This is most clearly the case in the first-year seminar entitled "The Individual and Community," in which students explore contemporary issues that highlight the tension between the values of individualism and the collective good in American life. Students also carry out a community involvement project for "The Individual and Community" course. This component, which can be fulfilled either by off-campus service or by involvement in an organization on campus, has become one of the most popular aspects of the core among students, and has been influential in shaping perceptions of the college's mission both on campus and in the surrounding community.

More broadly, beyond the concrete influence the individual and community theme has had in shaping the curriculum, it could also be argued that the phrase individual and community itself has shaped the way we talk about ourselves as an institution, and, therefore, our sense of who we are. For example, faculty have become increasingly critical of aspects of our college that do not reflect the ideals, expressed and implied, by the individual and community theme ("You'd think a place that emphasizes individual and community would do a better job of. . ."), but the language also pops up in some of our more constructive dialogue about what goals to pursue as an institution. The understanding conveyed in some of this everyday "I and C" discourse is often quite unsophisticated, but the core concept generally seems to be that the college has declared itself to be concerned for the public good.

To borrow a phrase from William Sullivan, we seem to have stepped away, however cautiously, from the "default program" of American higher education — that is, the model that sees higher education purely as a tool for the individual economic advancement of students. Are our students all routinely supportive of our emerging civic mission? Not entirely — nor, it should be added, are we unanimous as a faculty. As academics, however, our work on the liberal education curriculum has led us to engage with each other and with students in new ways. Ultimately, it may be the lessons learned from the process of developing and teaching these interdisciplinary courses, rather than any expressed education goals or thematic content, that have done the most to move us

THE INDIVIDUAL & COMMUNITY INTEGRATED CURRICULUM

FRANKLIN PIERCE COLLEGE — RINDGE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the spring of 1991, the faculty of Franklin Pierce College adopted a new general education program, the requirements of which went into effect with the entering class of 1992. The 42-credit curriculum consists almost entirely of a sequence of required core courses, organized around the theme of "the individual and community," that are taken in common by all students. Most of the courses in the program are interdisciplinary and team planned; several courses are team taught.

Summary of Course Sequence

First-year students begin the sequence with a one-semester seminar called "The Individual and Community," which explores historical background on the relationship between the individual and the collective in American culture, and examines contemporary issues that highlight the ongoing tensions between individualism and community. Students also are asked to complete a "community involvement project" for the course, which has led to a marked increase in student volunteerism and service in the surrounding area. Also in the first year, students take a two-semester laboratory science sequence — either the "Integrated Science" course that was designed as part of the new core sequence, or one of the traditional disciplinary natural science courses — and a two-semester process-oriented "College Writing" course.

Sophomores take a sequence of two interdisciplinary humanities courses — "The American Experience" in the fall and "The Twentieth Century" in the spring. Both of these courses have focused primarily on literary and historical perspectives, with "The American Experience" course organized around thematic units and "The Twentieth Century" taking a more chronological approach and including consideration of non-Western cultures. Sophomores also take "Experiencing the Arts," an interdisciplinary arts course that brings a series of visiting artists to campus for weekly in-class performances and presentations. The one-semester math requirement, for which students are allowed to choose from several courses,

also is typically taken in the sophomore year.

Juniors continue the humanities sequence by choosing one of two interdisciplinary courses — "The Ancient and Medieval Worlds" or "Reason and Romanticism." Both of these courses integrate history, literature, and visual arts and music, and are designed to build on "American Experience" and "Twentieth Century" courses by exposing students to the historical antecedents of the themes and issues raised in the sophomore-level classes. Also in the junior year, students take an interdisciplinary social science sequence called, "The Science of Society I and II." This course examines social phenomena in a "concentric ring" format, moving from the study of individual identity to more "macro" issues such as global politics and economic systems.

Seniors enroll in either fall or spring in a one-semester "Senior Liberal Arts Seminar." There are currently two versions of this capstone course offered — "New Worlds of Love and Work" and "Ecology and Culture." Both versions are intended to engage students in the application of perspectives gained from previous courses in the program, and especially to do so in the context of looking to the future and thinking about meaningful problems in the lives of their communities.

Portfolio Assessment

Another component of the core curriculum is the portfolio system. Students purchase an accordion-style file in the freshman year and are asked to keep specified items of their work from core courses, as well as any other items they choose to include. The portfolio system is intended to serve dual purposes — an educational, self-assessment function and a program evaluation function. The educational purpose happens formally at two points in the curriculum: first in the one-credit "Portfolio Assessment Seminar," taken during the second semester of sophomore year or first semester of junior year, in which students use their accumulated portfolio materials to engage in self-assessment and goal-setting activities; and again in the "Senior Liberal Arts Seminar," which includes a component of self-assessment activity. The program evaluation function is carried out in summer workshops in which a team of faculty evaluates samples of student portfolios from the sophomore and senior classes.

toward a new understanding of the public, and new forms of faculty citizenship and teaching practice.

Learning Better Faculty Citizenship through Interdisciplinary Curriculum Design

The experience of designing and refining the college's core courses in interdisciplinary teams over these past seven years has been rough going at times for the faculty, and not always very successful or satisfying. One important source of faculty frustration came from the difficulties we experienced in breaking free of our disciplinary identities and interests as we sought to engage more deeply and constructively with one another in our curricular collaborations. When we employed an understanding of ourselves as producers and disseminators of expert knowledge in our fields, and as guardians of disciplinary turf within the institution, we found ourselves unable to move beyond a kind of minimal cooperation and citizenship. Conflicts in some courses were worse than others depending on the particular mix of disciplines from which a synthesis was being attempted. The interdisciplinary social science courses seemed to have the most difficulty, interestingly enough, because the foundational assumptions constitutive of their disciplines — sociology, psychology, and economics, for example — seemed to contradict those of the others. This made interdisciplinary collaboration more difficult for members of those disciplines than it was for those in other academic areas like the natural sciences or the humanities, where the assumptions of the disciplines were not so contradictory. So long as those foundations were held to stubbornly by their proponents, forging any kind of common ground for course content was nearly impossible. The result more often than not was to retreat to a multidisciplinary strategy. What we were not able to produce, when we were in this posture, was something new — a real synthesis of perspectives and knowledge that none of us, operating within our own specialized way of understanding the topics, knew before.

As we come to embrace a civic educational role as an institution and as teachers, we are beginning to see the irony in this way of interacting as a faculty. We have also been surprised at how difficult it has been to change the habits and conceptions of an impoverished citizenship in our own professional lives. The reliance on adversarial debate, expert and specialized disciplinary identities, and conflict-of-interest models of group process and

decision making have brought us up short of our faculty goals whenever we have fallen back on them. This experience has prompted some of us to search for new professional identities and modes of discourse.

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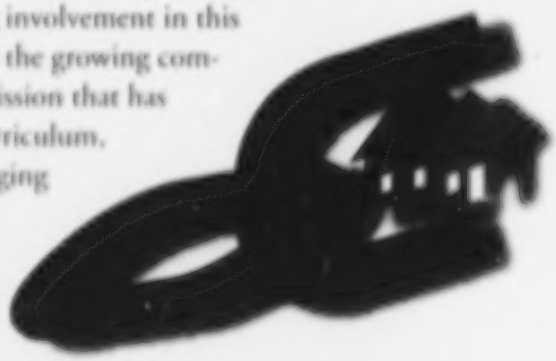
There is much evidence that the momentum set in place by our decision to develop the interdisciplinary core program has led to some positive changes in the faculty. There is increased collaboration about teaching and across disciplines. Faculty have moved, however tentatively, away from the expertise model of our role and are more comfortable making decisions and creating courses together. One great example of this increased collaboration has been the spontaneous faculty creation, three years ago, of the college's first research institute around an interdisciplinary theme. The Monadnock Institute of Nature, Place, and Culture includes faculty from across several disciplines as well as staff and members of the surrounding communities with an interest in the topic. They have sponsored conferences and workshops and have helped create a stronger link between the college and the communities in the surrounding area through their various activities. Though primarily focused on the natural environment and the literary and historical dimensions of local environments, their interest in the relationship between "place" and public life is growing perhaps, in part, because of the college's movement toward a larger civic mission.

Seeing the Liberal Arts Core as Public Education

Another recent element of our movement toward a new public role has been the involvement of several Franklin Pierce faculty members in a local school/community program called the Civic Action Project (CAP). The CAP initiative, inspired by David Mathews' book *Is There a Public for Public Schools?* is attempting to address the disconnect between the public and their schools by promoting deliberative dialogue around local, state, and national issues. Three of us have participated in workshops on deliberative dialogue, and have helped to facilitate public forums sponsored by CAP. This

involvement has been motivated in part by a desire to learn better ways to construct discussion and improve the quality and effectiveness of our participation in framing issues and shaping college policy. The skills we are learning are beginning to be used on campus by faculty and students to help us talk more constructively about a host of college issues ranging from our institutional mission to problems of race and diversity on campus. At a more subtle level, this activity has strengthened our growing awareness of a contradiction between our commitment to integrated, liberal education and our adherence to professional identities rooted in positivist epistemology and the scholarship of expertise.



Through our deepening involvement in this community organization and the growing commitment to a larger public mission that has been initiated by our core curriculum, Franklin Pierce College is forging another link to its surrounding communities and has widened its view of the role it can play in strengthening public life. This community/college collaboration has now led to the establishment of a Public Policy Institute at the college, in collaboration with the Kettering Foundation, that is designed to assist citizens from around the state and across New England in their efforts to create more "space" for citizens to engage in public life and to promote deliberative dialogue as a method for more constructively addressing matters of public policy.

The experience of deliberation on and off campus is also leading us to deepen our understanding of "public" and "community," and is teaching us another pedagogical approach for addressing the individual and community theme that runs through our core curriculum. Deliberation, we are learning, engages citizens (faculty and/or students), helps them to "take in" and be changed by the thoughts and experiences of others, to see their interrelated and complementary interests, and to work together to solve the problems of their common lives. This does not happen by insisting on like-mindedness or consensus, but simply occurs as people talk and discover where their values, interests, and agendas intersect. Deliberation reveals common ground and creates new knowledge about how to address and take action

on problems that affect the group as a whole. This approach celebrates individuality and diversity, while also forging connections and a sense of common purpose and identity. The results are better (wiser and more just) because it is inclusive and participatory. This experience is showing us more tangibly how the *E Pluribus Unum* of public life is what lies between compromise and consensus, disagreement and agreement, individual and community. Participating in and experiencing that kind of public life is most effectively accomplished by giving people (students) an ongoing opportunity to deliberate with one another, and to act together to address issues that affect their community and society at large — that is, to *practice the arts of civic discourse*. It is also showing us that more and better faculty deliberation can bring about greater success in our curricular collaborations and efforts in faculty and college governance.

The practice of deliberation demands a public-spirited perspective. This perspective is what is needed to be able to move beyond our multidisciplinary tendencies and to achieve a truly interdisciplinary general education curriculum. An integrated education in the liberal arts is invaluable to students (and citizens) if the goal is to deeply understand and imagine new connections among themselves and the experiences and viewpoints of others. These are the characteristics that need to be developed if we are to prepare students for the "office" of citizen. As scholar Ralph Ketcham has described in his essay "The Liberal Arts and Civic Education," this education will be even more valuable if, in addition to being integrative, it is also *profound* and *radical*. Learning and instruction that probes deeply the meaning of the human condition, provides ample opportunity to confront and consider radically alternative visions of how life might best be lived individually and collectively, and that includes a knowledge of the whole as well as the parts, is likely to be of great help to anyone who is trying to take seriously their role as citizen in a self-governing society. Joseph Tussman has made the important point that if we live in a democracy where the people are ultimately the rulers, then we must regard ourselves and our students as officeholders in government. Preparing for the office of citizen and exercising that office ourselves as faculty members is greatly aided by a liberal arts education that has a public mission. It is this kind of faculty citizenship and public education that we are trying to create at Franklin Pierce College.

PRACTICING AND MODELING THE "ARTS OF DEMOCRACY":

Higher Education's Renewed Civic Commitment

By Nancy L. Thomas and Deborah J. Hirsch

Something very exciting may be happening in American higher education. Across the country, colleges and universities are emerging from their "ivory towers" to form new and more meaningful relationships with their surrounding communities. Activities take many forms: mobilizing resources to collaborate in neighborhood revitalization plans, serving as partners to seek solutions to pressing regional social and economic problems, working with local schools or teachers to improve elementary and secondary education, expanding student volunteer opportunities, revising curricula to link student academic experiences with public service, and adopting learning formats that are more accessible to adult learners. Sometimes, particularly for some land grant universities, historically black colleges and universities, urban institutions, and community colleges, the changes are subtle and involve improving what they have been doing all along. Usually, however, the changes reflect a *dramatic* shift in institutional mission, values, and culture.

This article examines this shift in higher education. First, it considers *why* higher education is reaching out to external constituencies after years of insulation and perceived indifference. It considers the "places" on campus where civic education and engagement occur. In doing so, it provides a yardstick against which institutions can measure their own practices.

Higher education's mission is historically rooted in training religious and civic leaders. Yet somewhere along the way, colleges and universities became "disconnected" in many ways: by separating research from teaching and research and teaching from public service and action; by failing to link theory and application; distinguishing liberal learning from professional studies; by emphasizing skill development without a corresponding commitment to citizenship skills; by dividing disciplines to the point that students cannot understand their interrelationship; by segregating

student and academic affairs; and by erecting physical and symbolic barriers to neighboring communities and relegating "town-gown" affairs to one individual or office.

Students became caught up in these "disconnects" as well. Educators such as Arthur Levine (1981) worried that students constituted the "me" generation, concerned with personal gain and job prospects but little else. Allan Bloom (1987) called these students "lost souls in the basement." And it seemed that colleges and universities were doing little to refocus students' attention. Perhaps educator Ernest Boyer (1996) summarized it best when he said:

> What I find most disturbing ... is a growing feeling in this country that higher education is, in fact, part of the problem rather than the solution.... Increasingly, the campus is being viewed as a place where students get credentialed and faculty get tenured, while the overall work for the academy does not seem particularly relevant to the nation's most pressing civic, social, economic, and moral problems.

Commensurately, social scientists such as Robert Bellah worry that Americans in general overemphasize personal choice and development without a corresponding sense of social or civic responsibility. Reports such as the National Commission on Civic Renewal's *A Nation of Spectators* (1998) warned that Americans are alarmingly "disengaged." Measuring political participation, trust in government, crime statistics, divorce rates, and other related indicators, the commission's report warned that "our overall civic condition is weaker than it was — and in need of significant improvement." "Our civil society is less than civil" (Mathews, 1997) and deeply divided along economic and racial lines. These conditions, many argue, weaken our democracy.

Higher education is responding to both the "disconnects" and to broader concerns over society's perceived weak civic health. Although they continue to struggle with "what works," college and university leaders have recommitted themselves to reconnecting with external communities, particularly the surrounding neighborhoods, and to engaging students in valuable lessons in civic responsibility.

Some campus leaders dispute the claim that the current flurry of activity is something new. They argue that their institutions already offer civic education and/or engage external communities.

Land grant universities point to their charters that have always emphasized "outreach" or "public service" activities. Others, such as long-standing members of Campus Compact or the National Society for Experiential Education, assert that their commitments to service-learning predated the current rhetoric dominated by concerns over democracy. Urban institutions point to their hospitals or their community service activities to support a claim that their institutions are already engaged. Research universities claim to enable scholars to produce their best work and that alone is and should be recognized as an invaluable "service" to society. The very core of community colleges and historically black colleges and universities lies in their commitment to providing an education to previously underserved populations.

These educators are partly right. Their long-standing activities should not be discounted by the current rhetoric. Yet, perhaps all colleges and universities could be taking their civic missions more seriously. At most institutions, common academic outreach and public service activities — cooperative extension and adult education, clinical programs, faculty-applied research, community partnerships, and service-learning — occupy a marginal status on campus. They tend to be isolated projects or units, disconnected from the traditional academic functions of the institution. Their existence tends to be linked closely to one or a few individuals, and if those individuals leave, the project flounders or dies. Community-based projects tend to be devalued or invisible on campus, deemed an "add-on" or work not integral to the "real" mission of the institution.

To David Mathews (1998), president of the Kettering Foundation, colleges and universities need to "reposition themselves in public life, in part by *creating more public space on their campuses*, more places for people to do the work a democratic citizenry must do." (emphasis added). Institutions need to *foster in their students and model as institutions* a commitment to "the arts of democracy — dialogue, engagement, and responsible participation." (Guarasci and Cornwell, 1997). In short, colleges and universities should *renew their civic missions*.

How do colleges and universities "create public space" on campus where they can attend to the civic mission of the institution? They can start by examining the "places" on campus where civic education and engagement "happen," specifically:

- Academic programs that educate students in the

The "engaged campus" is one that fosters student citizenship skills through its educational and cocurricular programs and activities....

previously identified arts of democracy — dialogue, engagement, and active participation.

- Cooperative extension and adult learning
- Clinical programs and community-based programs at professional schools
- Administratively driven community partnerships
- Academically driven community partnerships
- Faculty professional service and academic outreach
- Student initiatives
- Institutional policies and procedures that affect community access and relations.[1]

These activities should not be examined in isolation. They should be *integrated, cross-cutting, and linked to the academic mission of the institution.* The "engaged campus" is one that fosters student citizenship skills through its educational and cocurricular programs and activities *and* through conscious modeling of those skills through external partnerships and activities and internal processes.

Academic Programs

Courses and curricula arguably provide the primary forum for enhancing student understanding of the arts of democracy. Yet higher education has taken giant steps from the traditional course on Western Civilization or Political Theory. Through innovative curricula, students link theory with practice and contextualize what they study through experiential learning. Some curricular reforms are reflected in the following examples:

- A "civics across the curriculum" or "democracy across the curriculum" program that looks at an entire curriculum and identifies courses and programs that can stress civic themes.
- Incorporating themes of living and working in a culturally diverse society across the curriculum. At the College of St. Catherine, for example, all students must take a course on "The Global Search for Justice." The course involves a multidisciplinary examination of conditions of justice experienced by people of both Western and non-Western cultures. Similarly, Occidental College adopted a core curriculum in which first-year students enroll in Cultural

Studies Programs, team-taught, multidisciplinary courses that focus on cultural pluralism.

- Adopting community service requirements for students and supporting them with "cocurricular transcripts" or "portfolio development" (as is done at Wheaton College) that can be shared with prospective employers and graduate schools.
- Focusing experiential learning opportunities for students by linking them to community-based or service-learning.
- Offering innovative first-year programs or senior capstone experiences (and in some cases, sophomore year programs) with cross-cutting themes of civic education and engagement, diversity, "real life" problem solving, service-learning, and collaborative learning.
- Identifying opportunities for students to work collaboratively in and with communities and linking that group work to academic achievement.
- Requiring students to take courses on philosophy, moral reasoning, and/or ethics, and designing those courses to emphasize practical application and problem solving.
- Creating learning communities — academic clusters that take a multidisciplinary approach to pressing social, economic, or civic issues.
- For-credit programs during winter, spring, or summer vacations that involve civic themes.

These courses and programs do not replace traditional academic study (reading assignments, class discussions and lectures, writing assignments, and evaluation). They do, however, link such study to (1) community service, (2) collaboration and cooperative learning, (3) residential life, (4) and problem-based learning. Students are required to reflect on and share their experience, often through a journal or a presentation. And while innovative pedagogies were once reserved for first-year programs or capstone courses, more institutions are involving upper classes or including them in the core curriculum, making these experiences common to all students. Creative pedagogies, once linked to liberal arts or social science curricula, also extend to professional programs such as business, law, and engineering.

... it is rare to find a college or university that does not offer courses or programs for older learners interested in personal or professional development.

Cooperative Extension and Continuing Education

Land grant universities can legitimately claim to be grounded in a distinctly "public" role. Created through federal legislation, land grant universities were started to provide open access and applied research for states. As the country shifted from an agrarian to an industrial society, land grants added significant adult learning programs. Many other institutions followed suit, and now it is rare to find a college or university that does not offer courses or programs for older learners interested in personal or professional development.

Traditionally, however, extension and continuing education programs consisted of prearranged courses usually designed by "instructors" and run through an extension school or office of continuing education. Faculty members were not tenure track, nor was their work linked to the traditional academic units on campus. "Outreach" was the domain of the extension faculty and not the responsibility of tenured or tenure-track scholars.

Some institutions, however, are changing this structure. At the University of Georgia-Athens, although a central office of Public Service and Extension manages over $30 million in grants and contracts to support public service initiatives, each academic school or college also has a dean or coordinator for outreach. At Michigan State University and Oregon State University, extension faculty members are now members of academic departments where they hold full faculty status, undergo annual evaluation, and earn tenure. Promotion and tenure standards are the same for all faculty members. At Michigan State University, "outreach scholarship," is defined as a cross-cutting enterprise — cutting across teaching, research, and service lines — and "involves generating, transmitting, applying, and preserving knowledge for the direct benefit of external audiences," (Provost's Report, 1993).

Another difference is in how their programs respond to external communities. Michigan State University offers both the predesigned courses and program (called "instructional outreach") and "problem-focused outreach." Problem-focused outreach develops in response to a perceived or communicated need from the external community. Drawing from all of the institution's human resources, the institution works collaboratively with external communities to identify and resolve identified problems.

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Clinical Programs Associated with Professional Schools

Clinical programs can have a dramatic impact on external communities. Yet, like cooperative extension and adult learning programs, the historical approach was for institutions to follow a predesigned curriculum at the convenience of the institution and faculty.

Some institutions are taking their programs into the communities, rather than making the communities come to them, with significant effects. At the Center for Healthy Communities at Wright State University in Ohio, student clinical experiences occur in area schools, community walk-in clinics, housing projects, churches, homeless shelters, and visiting nurse associations. West Virginia University's School of Medicine offers "MDTV," a two-way video communication network that enables rurally located interns and physicians the ability to work with medical specialists across the state.

These changes — (1) using technology to increase access, (2) focusing on current and pressing problems and issues rather than established curricula, and (3) going into communities rather than expecting communities to come to the clinics — enhance student learning while they enhance the quality of life for external communities.

Institutional Initiatives

Urban institutions across the county are announcing plans to work with their local communities to revitalize deteriorating neighborhoods — simultaneously revitalizing enrollments and town-gown relationships. Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Southern California, SUNY Stony Brook, the University of Massachusetts (Lowell and Boston), the University of Louisville, UCLA, Howard University, Marquette University, Tulane, and Jackson State offer some examples. The Department of Housing and Urban Development funds many of these efforts, and in the past 5 years has funded 78 colleges and universities in partnership with their communities. Similarly, Fannie Mae is funding university-community partnerships, providing more than $100 million to six communities alone and $5 million to 14 universities nationwide, (Hartigan, 1999).

Institutions that take their civic education and engagement responsibilities seriously support them with significant human and financial resources. Commitments can come from many sources:

(1) the president;

(2) an administrative office;

(3) an academically based center or institute; and
(4) students.

The President: Few presidents are collaborating better with local communities than Evan Dobelle at Trinity College. When they get involved personally, the results can be dramatic. Dobelle's well-publicized "neighborhood revitalization plan" involves transforming 15 blocks surrounding the campus into an educational, business, and residential community with science, medical, and technology themes. The plan includes raising more than $200 million — $6 million from Trinity's endowment — for schools, job training, mortgage assistance, family services, and physical improvements. A bus station is being transformed into three new schools. The campus has literally removed gates to provide access to the community, including a boys and girls club, a family resource center, child care facilities, and a job training program. The college is renovating dilapidated buildings and selling them to residents through reduced-rates mortgages. The streets are being upgraded through additional lighting, police security, and small touches such as attractive fencing.

What makes Trinity's plan unique and successful is that it involves a serious partnership with the local community.

What makes Trinity's plan unique and successful is that it involves a serious partnership with the local community. A neighborhood group is coordinating the efforts. They work closely with many institutional leaders, and leaders from other area nonprofits, the Hartford Hospital and the Institute for Living. These three ingredients — (1) working collaboratively with the local community, (2) committing its own resources, and (3) centering the efforts in its president — generate good will and good publicity, for the institution.

Centralized Administrative Units: Most colleges and universities have offices charged with the responsibility for unruffling feathers in the community and tending to town-gown relations. Many also have offices of service-learning or experiential learning. A few institutions are combining these functions, and linking them to other academic and outreach functions as well.

The Center for Community Partnerships at the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) offers a model for this centralized effort. Through the center, the university runs a neighborhood revitaliza-

tion program, academically based community service projects, continuing education, a minority purchasing program, a journal, a newsletter, and a replication project that now reaches more than 25 institutions nationwide. Similarly, at Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI), the Center for Public Service and Leadership links student service-learning, faculty professional scholarship, volunteerism, and student leadership. Through countless university-community partnerships, the center links student development with community renewal.

Centers such as those at UPenn and IUPUI serve as "brokers," "liaisons," and "advocates" for community-based activities. They do not "take over" existing projects on campus, although they might initiate them based on perceived needs. Rather, they serve to coordinate projects, link them to other activities, and add value by helping obtain symbolic and financial support, visibility, or campuswide recognition for external projects.

Academically Based Activities: Partnerships with external communities often come from academically based centers and institutes and/or department or schoolwide efforts. Institutes and centers usually result from the entrepreneurial thinking of an individual or group of individuals concerned with a specific problem or need. They tend to be interdisciplinary, collaborative, and offer a variety of programs or activities ranging from degrees, workshops, consulting, and one-time events. At Tulane University, a new entity called the National Center for the Urban Community evolved from the institution's work with the New Orleans' eight public housing authorities. The center draws from many disciplines across campus. It supports faculty outreach scholarship, student community-based learning, and professional development for government employees and housing authority residents.

Departments and schools can work collectively to provide meaningful resources to a community. At Michigan State University, for example, students in the science departments work together to write and perform a "Science Theater" in area shopping malls and schools. At Western New England College, faculty and students in the School of Engineering sponsor a *Future City Competition*, an educational and mentoring

Eighty-seven percent of young Americans polled say that "making a difference in the life of someone close to you" is important to them personally.

program for eighth graders. Teams of students, a teacher, and a volunteer engineer design a model city, considering issues such as safety, zoning, transportation, and recycling. College students and faculty host and judge this regional contest.

Institutions that are home to centers and institutes need to make certain that the work of those centers is not supported solely by one grant, so that if the grant money ends, the project dies. Similarly, academic centers are often linked to the work of one or a few individuals who, if they leave, either take the center with them or fail to establish it as a permanent entity on campus. Marginalized and misunderstood, these centers sometimes find that their continuation is precarious.

Student initiatives: Recent studies and reports of student interests and activities indicate that students are seeking new ways to connect with their communities or others. Eighty-seven percent of young Americans polled say that "making a difference in the life of someone close to you" is important to them personally. They want to "assist others" and forge new solutions to problems. They are willing to work cooperatively and collaboratively, but want to focus their energies on a small scale (Peter D. Hart Research Associates, 1998). Art Levine (1999) wrote in a recent issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, "Today's generation of college students is committed to making the world a better place...." He quotes a student from the University of Colorado who says, "I can't do anything about the theft of nuclear-weapons materials from Azerbaijan, but I can clean up the local pond, help tutor a troubled kid, or work at a homeless shelter." Colleges and universities need to find ways to capture this renewed passion and link it to student learning.

To illustrate this renewed passion, law students at Tulane University's Environmental Law Clinic caused a political stir when they represented a poor, predominantly black neighborhood challenging a company interested in building a $700 million chemical plant nearby. The governor of Louisiana accused the students of being "antidevelopment" and threatened to pull tax breaks from the university. Faculty argued that the clinic provides a valuable service to an underserved community while students gained litigation experience. (Mangan, 1997).

Faculty Professional Service and Academic Outreach

The New England Resource Center for Higher Education

(NERCHE) at the University of Massachusetts-Boston awards the annual Ernest Lynton Award for Professional Service and Academic Outreach to faculty members who use their academic expertise to benefit external communities. Reflecting the changes in faculty roles nationally, the number of nominations catapulted from 12 in the award's first year, to 50 in 1997, to more than 150 in 1998. The nominations represented a broad range of institutional types, disciplines, and regions of the country. The nominated faculty have committed themselves, often over decades, to working with homeless people, at-risk youth, prisoners, environmental issues, urban revitalization, and more. Their work in the community is closely connected to their teaching and students. Indeed, many nominees had already received awards on their campuses for exemplary teaching. Perhaps even more compelling are the ways these faculty members have turned their scholarly writing and research in the direction of the issues that engage them in their external activities. In 1998, awards were made to faculty for a number of activities, for example, for founding a center that links traditional academic learning with community-based learning, for teaching literature and writing to prisoners, battered women, and the poor, for bringing citizens and experts together to solve problems relating to the future of health care, and for academically based work with immigrants and refugees.

To encourage faculty members to use their expertise in meaningful and relevant ways, colleges and universities must reconsider their reward systems. Community activist and teacher Mel King stated it simply: "If you want to talk about community-building and reaching out, then you have to value the people who go out and do the work in the community when it comes time for promotion," (NERCHE, 1998). Some institutions have revised their standards for promotion and tenure to validate and recognize externally based research as valid scholarship. Following Ernest Boyer's scheme of the "scholarship of engagement," these institutions evaluate faculty based on their demonstrated "discovery," "integration," "interpretation," and "application" of knowledge.

(Boyer, 1996). At Portland State University, the faculty guidelines state: "Faculty engaged in community outreach can make a difference in their communities and beyond by defining or resolving relevant social problems or issues, by facilitating organizational development, by improving existing practices or programs, and by enriching the cultural life of the community." The recent publication, *Making Outreach Visible* (Lynton and Driscoll, 1999), offers strategies, with examples, of how faculty can document their work in "professional service portfolios" so that it can be assessed commensurate with more traditional forms of scholarship.

Colleges and universities can also wield their significant economic power to advance political goals....

Institutional Policies and Practices That Impact Communities

Colleges and universities should examine their day-to-day administrative practices and consider their impact on surrounding communities. If an institution disciplines a student for a nonacademic violation — vandalism, for example — and the punishment is expulsion from the dormitory but not the institution, then that student ends up in the community. If an institution needs more space and starts buying houses in the surrounding neighborhoods, what impact will that have on those neighborhoods? If an institution is worried about security and safety, and limits access to libraries, exhibits, or recreational facilities, how welcome will members of the surrounding community feel on campus? Should an institution charge the public for access to community events such as sports activities or cultural events? Should campus security patrol streets where students live in university-owned housing? Institutions need to think through their day-to-day activities and decisions and consider how their actions impact their neighbors.

Colleges and universities can also wield their significant economic power to advance political goals (recall the fervor over divesting in corporations with South African holdings), to support minority-owned businesses, or to support local vendors. Many institutions have adopted plans that encourage departments to buy from local business, even if it means spending more money or setting aside a percentage of the purchasing contracts for that cause.

Many institutions, particularly urban institutions, offer faculty and staff incentives — often a mortgage assistance program — to live locally. This kind of program generates both good will and

good publicity for an institution.

Maintaining a Democratic "Internal House"

That college and universities cannot effectively teach the arts of democracy without simultaneously modeling them seems axiomatic. Yet modeling those arts should not be limited to external partnerships alone. Judith Ramaley, president of the University of Vermont, addressed this issue in her remarks at the New England Resource Center for Higher Education's 10th Anniversary Symposium:

> A university can support learning of this deeper nature through its approach to the curriculum and through the practice of a set of values that allows the institution itself to be a working model of democracy. A substantial part of the civic mission of a university begins on its own campus. (NERCHE, 1998)

Institutions need to examine their "internal house" and make sure it is in order. Colleges and universities should consider whether their own decision-making processes are, indeed, democratic. Hierarchical governance structures, common to most campuses, fail to enhance "social capital," the trust, norms, and networks that allow people to work together through shared activities and interchange. Developing social capital requires individuals and organizations to learn and practice the skills of working together in a collaborative way to understand and solve complex problems. Institutions should consider whether their written policies mirror actual practices. Are problems faced squarely? Are diverse opinions and dissent solicited, discussed, shared, and valued? How are competing interests balanced? Are the processes collaborative and inclusive? Are decisions explained and then revisited at a later date?

Conclusion

This article provides institutions an inventory of "places" where they can direct their energies to create the "engaged campus." Note, however, that while many of the programs and initiatives profiled can be replicated, they need to be adapted to match each institution's culture, historical mission, current goals, student demographics, geography, and external community. As in any institutional transformation effort, as much attention must be paid to implementation as design. In addition, it is all too easy to focus on internal structures, resources, and goals; equal time must be spent defining the communities, identifying partnership opportunities,

and listening to and understanding their needs and constraints. Any institution that teaches *and practices* the arts of democracy knows that the process is participatory, time consuming, and neither linear nor without obstacles.

Embedded in the process of reaching out to communities is a "hidden curriculum" that contains the implicit, but perhaps strongest, mechanisms for teaching and modeling the arts of democracy. How "community" is defined, how partnerships are conceptualized and structured, and how and by whom the products are used, reflect the attitudes and values that may teach students more about civic life than the activity itself. The process of establishing external partnerships needs to be mutual, collaborative, and respectful. Colleges and universities should not treat communities as "laboratories" or community service "opportunities." Rather, institutions can learn *from and with* external constituencies important community-building techniques, the value of diversity, techniques for effective exchange of ideas, meaningful engagement, and how to collaborate productively, all essential civic skills.

What will the "engaged campus" look like? Look for evidence of: internal policies and procedures that are democratic in spirit and reality; explicit cognitive and affective outcomes related to effective citizenship; issues and themes related to civic learning woven throughout the curriculum; a demonstrated commitment to engaging participation from diverse student, faculty, and staff populations; individual and collaborative community-based learning that is linked to courses found in many disciplines and courses; first-year and capstone courses that incorporate civic themes with community service; evidence of sustained, responsive, and reciprocal partnerships with the community; student codes of academic and nonacademic behavior rooted in individual and social responsibility on and off campus; faculty professional service incorporated into discussions of faculty and unit workload; assessment techniques (for both students and faculty) that consider products demonstrating civic learning and community contributions; faculty development and renewal programs and opportunities that develop and enhance abilities to work collaboratively; promotion and tenure policies that recognize and value community contributions; and ongoing institutional evaluation and assessment of community-based programs, courses, and civic learning outcomes.

Any one of these goals can present daunting challenges to even the most committed institutions. Yet institutions that are deeply immersed in renewing their civic missions experience external good will and respect, internal excitement and heightened morale, and graduates who are deeply committed to and skilled in the arts of democracy. And this is the most meaningful and effective civic contribution higher education can play.

These typologies and their descriptions in other parts of this article were adapted from an essay by Nancy L. Thomas, "The College and University as Citizen," publication pending, in *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education* (ed. Thomas Ehrlich; Oryx Press).

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AN EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE

By Amy Catherine Sokolowski

With the approach of the millennium, the current state of higher education as an institution is being called into question. Supporters and critics alike have come to debate and discuss the problems and possibilities that our nation's educational system will face in the near future. One important issue that has been a point of focus of recent scholarship has been the assessment of the role of higher education in the Information Age. With recent complaints voiced by unemployed, degree-holding students, tuition-paying parents, unhappy with the results of institutional learning, and businesses that are met with poorly trained graduates, many have questioned whether our existing models of education are adequate.

In an attempt to reassure its role and remain on the competitive cutting edge of learning, higher education has turned to technology to improve its efficiency. Some institutions such as the University of Phoenix have even offered on-line distance learning opportunities. Yet, many argue that this change in higher education is merely transitional. What is really necessary is a transformation of the "factory model" of learning that has focused on inputs and outputs, passive students and lecture-oriented teachers, to a "transformative model" that redefines the purpose and the productivity level of higher education.

In Transforming Higher Education: A Vision for Learning in the 21st Century (Ann Arbor, MI: Society for College and University Planning, 1995) authors Donald M. Norris, president of Strategic Initiatives, Inc. and Michael G. Dolence, president of Michael G. Dolence and Associates, have come together to share their experiences with helping many organizations develop strategies to meet the challenges of the Information Age. In this volume, which went into its second printing within three months of publication, the authors recognize there is a crisis in higher education as the nature of work, organizations, and learning is in flux. Consequently, there is a race to determine who will have ownership of the learning franchise. They argue that today, and even

...students must reconsider conceptions of how, when, and where learning occurs.

more so in the future, higher education will have to compete for learners with commercial firms and other intermediaries. While other institutions in the private sector have recognized that learning must involve the meeting of needs, the saving of time, and the achievement of mastery, academia has failed to react properly to the Information Age.

In order for higher education to survive, Norris and Dolence posit that an institution's learning system must evolve and expand beyond the classroom experience, and students must reconsider conceptions of how, when, and where learning occurs. Using the language and values of business literature, the authors argue that the solution lies in the "transformation" of our postsecondary schools, involving four processes: 1) realigning higher education with the Information Age; 2) redesigning academia to achieve this vision; 3) redefining roles and responsibilities; and 4) reengineering organizational processes. According to Norris and Dolence, once higher education encounters these four components, it will be able to function as a facilitator of "knowledge navigating skills." Tomorrow's colleges and universities will be part of a network of navigators, rather than the sole owners of knowledge-making, for "knowledge and intellectual property will flow freely."

The Information Age requires a shift to a learner-centered paradigm. The authors argue that one of the many benefits of this "transformative model" is that it allows for a fusion of learning and work that provides students with the skills to be productive in other sectors of the economy. Rather than taking time out for the accumulation of knowledge, students will become lifelong learners who will turn to the university as one of the many information support systems offering resources appropriate to their demands. In addition, the authors argue that technology will be the instruments that will enable faculty and administrative systems to work as a team, as both will be driven to ensure that their university will allow for outcomes that are "fast, fluid, and flexible."

Authors Stan Davis and Jim Botkin, two former Harvard Business School faculty members, offer yet another transformative vision of higher education in *The Monster Under the Bed: How Business Is Mastering the Opportunity of Knowledge for Profit* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994). In agreement with Norris and Dolence, these authors argue that too often higher education teaches material that is not useful to students. They begin their investigation of the motives that lie behind universities and col-

logos by noting how throughout history different institutions, such as religious organizations, the family, and governments have borne the responsibility for education. They note that with time, shifts in responsibility have largely been due to some form of social or political change in society. Davis and Botkin argue that in order for our nation to maintain current standards of living, the business community must become the next organization responsible for education. They predict that over the next few decades the private sector will eclipse the public, and teachers and schools will be forced to redefine their roles as learners become customers and businesses become educators. Why will businesses be best equipped for this position? First, the private sector has been forced to embrace new technologies in order to remain successful, flexible, and global, while academia has lagged behind. Second, government-run education has recognized only one way of learning as valid, teachers teaching and students learning, while businesses have recognized that there are a number of tools and techniques that can promote knowledge for profit, not just the accumulation of information. Third, the business community has the power to create a newly booming economy with the transformation of higher education.

Davis and Botkin point out a number of indicators that reveal this trend toward the private sector having influence on the public. These include the decline of government-led school systems, the rise of business ways of educating, the shift to "lifelong learning," and the growth of knowledge-based businesses. They note a number of examples where businesses are currently taking education into their own hands. Arthur Andersen is one such company that has run its own educational system, transforming its employees into learners and using its facilities to create knowledge necessary for the success of the company in a period of time that is nowhere near that spent in traditional university courses.

Yet, is a movement toward the reduction of economic values all that is involved in the redefinition of higher education? Is the role as "knowledge navigo-

tor" one that will enable higher education to promote a healthy society beyond raising our nation's productivity levels? While both of these works provide insightful evidence of how traditional higher education has come to lack the know-how and credibility to provide students with the skills necessary for the work force, they fail to recognize fully the potential role that academia might take in aiding other institutions. Just as colleges and universities may need the guidance of the business sector in the onslaught of the Information Age, I would argue that the private sphere could benefit from an equally balanced social contract between higher education and society. As the authors of both of these works note, academia, in its traditional liberal arts core curriculum, has left students unprepared for the job market of the twentieth century. I would argue though, that an extremist push for higher education to be directed by the private sphere would lead into another form of encapsulation. Undergraduate programs would come to be clearly linked to job training, as degrees would be geared toward tracts of specialized areas of professionalism. Meanwhile, students would fall short of benefiting from the study of human constructs and concerns that the liberal arts have brought to university learning.

... academia's redefinition must involve more than the changing of hands from government to businesses.

It has become evident to me as a graduating master's student in the humanities and as a potential Ph.D. candidate, that higher education's movement toward more practical concerns is definitely necessary, for being branded "unskilled" after years of schooling makes one wonder what purpose the expended effort and monetary cost served. At the same time though, academia's redefinition must involve more than the changing of hands from government to businesses. It must involve a discovery of how students could use the skills of reading and reflecting critically that one gains with a liberal arts education to help fellow institutions come to recognize their potential to analyze, debate, and react collectively to the issues and problems that face our communities. This exchange of knowledge would allow higher education to benefit from the information knowledge of businesses and, in turn, allow the private sector to envision higher education not merely as a training center, but also as institutes where they could develop skills to recognize and react to societal needs. In order for this to become a reality, reform must be more than a "takeover" of one institution for another, it must involve an effort in which both sectors work together to fulfill their responsibilities to the American public.

MEGACHALLENGES

By David Mathews

What dominates the agenda of the leaders of our colleges and universities? Rising costs that are straining restricted revenues and inadequately prepared students, according to a recent study by Public Agenda. A Kettering survey of the current projects of national higher education associations found that the most common subjects are: diversity, leadership, and service learning or community service.

The pressures identified by Public Agenda are real and demand a response. The projects of the associations are all worthwhile. Both require a great deal of serious thought and effort; no one is looking for a longer list. The subject of the *Higher Education Exchange* — the relationship between the academy and the public — is far down on the list of priorities, and only a partially identified one. Although being prodded to become more efficient and make better use of available technology, almost everyone agrees that our system of higher education is the best in the world.

It is worth noting that nearly all of our other major institutions, and the professionals within them, are deeply troubled by their relationship to the public. The government, the media, public schools, even foundations are reassessing themselves. Some have experienced a dramatic loss of public confidence. Others are not convinced that their programs are equipped to address the public problems facing our communities.

Why should colleges and universities be concerned with anything other than their own immediate difficulties? I think there are reasons to take a closer look at what I am calling the "megachallenges" facing not only our institutions but our communities as well. Megachallenges grow out of powerful, subterranean forces that slowly move the tectonic plates of our society. I have chosen four that I think have far-reaching significance and that raise new questions about the relationship of higher education to the public.

The Reemergence of Conviction-Based Conflict

The explosion in Oklahoma City that destroyed a federal building and killed scores of innocent people wasn't the first tragic bombing on American soil, nor our first experience with what people of ill will can do. What Oklahoma City did teach us is that one of our common assumptions about conflict is only partially valid. Factions have different positions on issues, yet we have found that, even when those interests conflict, we can often negotiate some resolution. What we are learning from Oklahoma City and from the reemergence of old hatreds around the world is that much of society is driven not primarily by interests but by convictions. We can negotiate differences among interests but not differences among convictions, particularly if they are bound up with personal identity. So we have to find other ways to keep from being destroyed by conflicts that are essentially moral, those that are inflamed by deeply held beliefs and all-consuming passions.

...much of society is driven not primarily by interests but by convictions.

Amy Gutmann, professor of politics at Princeton, and Dennis Thompson, professor of political philosophy at Harvard, have recognized the significance of moral conflict in their recent book *Democracy and Disagreement*. "Of the challenges that American democracy faces today," they conclude, "none is more formidable than the problem of moral disagreement. Neither the theory nor the practice of democratic politics has so far found an adequate way to cope with conflicts about fundamental values."

Gutmann and Thompson call for a democracy in which deliberation is central. Deliberation is weighing alternatives for political action against what is truly valuable to people; it takes into account the moral dimension of decisions. Deliberation is essential, they point out, because the moral authority or legitimacy of a court decree or legislative act or even a "No Smoking" sign depends on the quality of the process used to reach that decision. They don't recommend deliberation just for legislatures and courts; they believe it has to become a habit in "middle democracy," which is everywhere that people join together to make collective decisions — in civic organizations, professional associa-

tions, boards of nonprofit institutions, neighborhood assemblies, and so on. They understand that events like the Oklahoma City bombing only dramatize the problem of moral conflict, which is ubiquitous in everyday life — even on college campuses.

How well do institutions of higher education understand deliberative democracy? Not well at all, say Gutmann and Thompson. They do not think that academic discussion (whether in scholarly journals or college classrooms) is a suitable model for moral deliberation in politics. They point out that "academic discussion need not aim at justifying a practical decision, as deliberation must. Partly for this reason, such discussion is likely to be insensitive to the contexts of ordinary politics: the pressures of power, the problems of inequality, the demands of diversity, the exigencies of persuasion." They note further that moral reasoning is not the dominant method of any of the relevant academic disciplines.

Yet they do not excuse higher education from responsibility; to the contrary, they insist that educational institutions are, outside of government, the single most important institutions for putting deliberation back into a democracy currently overwhelmed by negative campaigns, partisan rhetoric, combative talk shows, and ordinary disrespect.

Wicked Problems That Are Replacing Tamer Ones

The emergence of old hates and conviction-driven conflict is a formidable problem. A less dramatic but equally serious difficulty is the increase in what have been called "wicked" problems, which are replacing the "tamer" ones we have solved in the twentieth century. A medical analogy may be helpful. People died of measles and smallpox until we found effective immunizations. Yet, today, people die of cancers that they wouldn't have lived long enough to experience if we hadn't learned how to prevent measles and smallpox. The old diseases were often fatal, but they proved more susceptible to control than the cancers that now plague us. Wicked illnesses have replaced the tamer ones on the mortality charts. Something very similar is happening with respect to our social problems. The effects are especially telling in our communities.

Despite the immensity of the difficulties that afflicted early twentieth-century America, they had the characteristics of "tame" problems. Now, at the end of the century, we are left with a

greater proportion of problems that are quite different. They resist our best programs and cleverest organizational schemes, even our vaunted expertise. Like mutinous troops, they refuse to disband and go away. A wicked social problem has characteristics that distinguish it from the tamer variety, among them:

The very name of the problem is difficult to come by. People can't be sure what the problem is because of its ever-changing form. It appears different to different people, or different to the same people in different circumstances.

The problem seems to have many origins, making it extremely difficult to pin down the real source. Every symptom suggests a different cause. Explanations of why the problem exists seem mutually exclusive.

The problem often defies logic. It should not exist; that it does, provokes puzzlement and exasperation.

Any outside intervention is likely to produce more than the usual number of unintended consequences. The problem may get worse as a result of trying to remedy it or as more serious side effects emerge.

The problem is deeply embedded in human nature and the social culture. It has deep roots and a long history. It evokes people's basic concerns, the things that are most valuable to them, yet it is impossible to be certain which of these imperatives should inform the response.

The problem is endless; it is impossible to imagine when it will be eradicated. Or there are disputes about when it has truly been "solved."

To test for wicked problems, three simple questions are useful: 1) Is the problem systemic? Some problems may be on the surface, like gum stuck to the bottom of our shoes; they can be handled easily. Others are far more deeply embedded in a community. 2) Does the problem require an ongoing response? Think of the difference between cutting down a tree and growing corn. We can cut down a tree once and for all in a single sawing. If we want to grow corn, however, we have to take a series of steps: tilling the soil, plant-

ing, fertilizing, weeding, harvesting. For growing corn, one trip to the field isn't enough. 3) Does the problem require multilateral action? Some problems can be handled by one institution or agency, while others are beyond the power of a single person or institution to manage. If the answer to these questions is yes, the problem is a wicked one. The usual strategy of breaking the difficulty into subcategories, designing categorical programs for each part, and holding one institution accountable for the "solution" is as ill suited for dealing with this kind of problem as putting a cast on someone suffering from diabetes would be. The remedy doesn't fit the disease. Wicked problems require action by the whole of a community.

Examples of wicked problems? Ethnic or racial conflict, the breakdown of families, the persistence of poverty in the face of rising prosperity. Why should some states and communities see the average per capita income increase by over 30 percent in less than a decade and yet also report an increase in the homeless population? This contradiction shouldn't be. So what is the problem, really? And what causes it? Is poverty an absence of resources, of education, of personal motivation? The debate goes on endlessly. Where is the source of poverty located? Is it in the economic system itself or in a social subculture? Is there an end to poverty or will the poor always be with us? Could we even agree on when we have reached an "acceptable" level of poverty?

Wicked problems call for the exercise of judgment and practical wisdom....

I said earlier that it is only natural for us to try to solve problems on the basis of what we learned from solving the same problems of the past. Yet our assumptions about "how things really get done" may be inappropriate for dealing with wicked problems. Rushing to find a solution is counterproductive when the name of the problem is unclear, when the cause is uncertain, and when intervention could make matters worse. Looking to experts to tell us what to do rather than "working through" conflicting motives and perceptions is the wrong approach. In dealing with wicked problems, the challenge is to identify actions that will narrow the gap between what is and what ought to be when what ought to be is not agreed on. Wicked problems call for the exercise of judgment and practical wisdom, which are best generated in deliberative dialogue. Factual information is necessary but not sufficient.

What does higher education have to do with the increase in wicked problems or the communities that encounter them? Except

for community colleges and some extension services, most colleges and universities deal with institutions and professions rather than communities. But an increase in wicked problems may put pressure on them to reconsider their focus, since these problems require a response from the whole community, not just a few agencies. This will not be easy. As George Fredrickson of the University of Kansas has observed, we spent most of the twentieth century building institutions and forgetting about communities.

Management lessons learned from solving tame problems are now deeply embedded in much of what colleges and universities teach, whether the subject is leadership, public administration, school administration, business, industrial engineering, hospital administration, or anything else of that ilk. They have also crept into related fields like journalism, providing a paradigm that accounts for "how things get done." Adjusting the paradigm to account for the peculiar characteristics of wicked problems will be difficult.

The kind of service institutions provide is also likely to be tested. Technical support and categorical programs won't be adequate assistance for communities facing wicked problems. Professionals will also have to maintain a different relationship with the communities they serve. They can't be what one group called "blow-ins," those who stand apart from the community.

Changing Standards for Knowledge

A third megachallenge has to do with a reappraisal of what it means to know. This challenge results, in part, from the second, from the pressures brought by wicked problems that won't go away. To meet it will require an epistemological realignment in which older ways of knowing that are based on human experience and developed socially get equal billing with modern, scientific ways of knowing. That realignment will be driven by problems that are highly resistant to technical control and expert solutions. Of course, we will still value the scientific expertise that has been so helpful in the twentieth century, even though we may find it less than adequate in particular situations.

In describing what amounts to an epistemological revolution, in previous issues of the *Exchange*, I have cited Václav Havel, specifically his 1995 address at Victoria University (New Zealand). Havel lived in a state informed by a scientific expertise supposedly so infallible that, if his experience indicated that he

wasn't well-off and yet Those-Who-Knew-Better said he was, he wasn't to believe his lying eyes. That led him to reject the claim that human society can be known in its entirety and that the knowledge of human society can lead to surefire strategies for reform. Such an assumption struck Havel as not only arrogant, in a world held together by "billions of mysterious interconnections," but just flat wrong. He has become a champion of gradual improvement continuously modified by shared experience.

Implications of this challenge to the current hierarchy of knowledge are as obvious as they are far-reaching. What institutions of higher education know and pass along to others is based largely on what the sciences and social sciences reveal. They provide excellent ways of answering questions that have only one answer. Citizens grappling with wicked problems, on the other hand, are called on to deal with questions that have more than one answer, questions that require the exercise of sound judgment. As I said earlier, this practical reasoning is developed, in deliberative dialogue, which draws on a wide range of human experience. If academics are to participate, they will have to shift from thinking *about* the public to thinking with the public. Again, the shift will not be easy.

Uncertainties about Our Ability to Govern Ourselves

...Americans... doubt their collective ability to bring about change....

The final megachallenge is already facing our government and many of our major institutions; they will have to respond to the other three at a time when confidence in them has fallen precipitously and their legitimacy as agents of the public is in serious question. Ironically, the century that seemed destined to end in the triumph of democracy may turn out to be the century when democracy faced its greatest tests. As in the story about the dilemma of "the dog that chased the car and caught it but then didn't know what to do with it," democracy is so commonplace that even dictators now feel obliged to describe their regimes as "transitions to democracy." Meanwhile, in the United States, a supposed bastion of democracy, participation in traditional forms of self-government like party politics and voting for representatives falls to lower levels every year.

More disturbing, there is recent evidence that Americans not only dislike and distrust the political system, they doubt their collective ability to bring about change (even though they are convinced that nothing will really change unless citizens act). No-

perception could be more debilitating in a political system based on the proposition that the people are sovereign.

The 1997-1998 National Issues Forums (NIF) issue book *Governing America: Our Choices, Our Challenge* presented three choices or options for reform. The first was to reinvent government, turning over many of its functions to the private sector. The second was to reduce the influence of lobbyists and special interests by strictly limiting campaign spending and initiating public financing of congressional and presidential campaigns. The third option focused not on government but on citizens and the role of the public, on reviving people's ability to form small-scale associations and act together to deal with public issues and community problems. This option would bring about reform by reinventing citizenship.

Some 150 local forums with roughly 1,500 participants again demonstrated that people see the government, especially at the federal level, as wasteful, inefficient, and out of touch. Elected officials are thought to advance special interests instead of the general, public interest. Of course, the persistent sense of disaffection, even alienation, from the political system does not mean that Americans no longer want an effective government to provide those services that governments are best suited to deliver, such as being a watchdog on matters like food safety.

The third option, rediscovering citizenship, struck a responsive chord with forum participants. Almost everywhere, initial reactions to the idea were overwhelmingly positive. In the words of a Delaware man, "This idea strikes at our hearts." There was also broad support for putting more emphasis on the responsibilities of citizenship. People should be involved, participants concluded, even if it is time consuming. Responses to the Post-Forum Questionnaires revealed that 69 percent of them endorsed the idea of having "citizens tackle major, pressing community problems on their own, without looking to the government." And 70 percent agreed

that "citizens should be *more involved* in community policy-setting, *even if this makes the process messier.*"

The difficulty with this option, participants said, was that it was hard to imagine how citizens can be effective in dealing with a system that seems beyond people's control. They saw barriers standing in the way of an active citizenry — time constraints, structural obstacles, and opposition from vested interests. More worrisome, they weren't sure whether their fellow citizens are equal to the task. Participants found it difficult to believe that people will ever have enough clout to make a real difference on the big issues. They were torn between their cynicism and their idealism.

...it was hard to imagine how citizens can be effective in dealing with a system that seems beyond people's control.

The views expressed in these forums contrast with results from studies of citizens who have participated in deliberative forums over a number of years. (See Dobbs Research Associates, *Responding to the Critics of Deliberation.*) They have seen people come to the task, make sound decisions on complex issues, form relationships with those who have different opinions, and join forces to bring about changes. So, while there is much cynicism to overcome, it is nevertheless possible to reimagine an effective citizenry.

What influence will the current democratic distress have on institutions of higher education? Probably none that will be immediately apparent. But, over the last three centuries, the public and its problems have continued to reshape our colleges and universities fundamentally, redefining their missions, and revising their curricula. The interests of these institutions are not unrelated to the health of our democracy. After all, their ancestors were "seminaries of sedition" prior to the American Revolution, and schools of leadership for the new republic; and they have been bases to democratic idealism in every generation.

Higher Education and the Megachallenges

How colleges and universities would wish to respond to the four challenges is easy to imagine — by being helpful, usefully critical, relevant. Yet the way they will actually deal with them, how quickly and how productively, will be determined by how they position themselves in the public world. That is where governmental and educational institutions find their legitimacy, their purpose, and their sustenance — in an ongoing interaction with citizens who are constantly revising the public agenda as circumstances dictate.

Points of entry into the public world can be pictured as

places on campus where the public assembles to do some of its work (which is the way the kind of public I am talking about comes into being). That work begins in making decisions about how to deal with the problems that threaten the common good. It is the work of forming the kinds of relationships that allow a diverse society to act in concert.

Imagine a large room, not the typical lecture hall with rows of chairs bolted to the floor, but the open, multipurpose space found in most student centers. In this hall, there will be citizens of the community, not just alumni and the members of professional associations who usually come to campus and not just the clients served by clinics. There will be teachers and lawyers and truckers, community activists and ministers, sheriffs and state representatives. They will come to campus so often that they won't think of themselves as guests. They will be there learning to do the work of citizens by doing that work. They will be deciding how to help youngsters growing up at risk, how to curb drug abuse, how to balance growth with environmental protection, how to get the results they want from schools. Their meetings will eventually expand the meaning of the word "service" in the academic catalogue because the institution will stand in a different relationship to the community.

Students and faculty will participate, but the citizens will set the agenda. Scholars will practice what Immanuel Kant called "thinking aloud." They will be producing knowledge with people and relating their expert learning to this practical wisdom. In the process, the meaning of research, the very definition of what it means to know, will be broadened. And students will get a more comprehensible political education from doing public work, beginning with the work of making decisions together. They may even get some sense of their collective power as citizens — the power of relationships formed in doing public work. Eventually, academic instruction will include the experimenting and learning from outcomes that characterize this public work. I will still be able to give my lectures on social and intellectual history — but in the next room.

I am not suggesting that colleges or universities become one

big forum, although I saw that happen once for three days at the University of Texas. (The National Issues Convention assembled a demographically representative group of Americans to deliberate on issues in the 1996 presidential elections and then question the candidates.) I have also seen it happen in the space provided by twenty-some new Public Policy Institutes (which I have discussed in a previous issue of the *Exchange*). But surely those aren't the only kinds of public-making spaces. So I have listed characteristics rather than giving a list of institutions.

The *Exchange* seeks to provide an opportunity for those engaged in creating public space on their campuses or in reconceiving higher education in the public world to share their thinking. This publication is now augmented by a series of seminars in Washington, D.C., where that inquiry can go forward. You have read something about the 1998 seminar in this issue. If you are interested in joining the conversation, by all means let our editors hear from you.

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